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1897—1899.

S. J. Messmer

BY

JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J.

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PREFACE.

On 2 April, 1895, the Holy See decided to tolerate the residence of Catholic laymen at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. A condition was appended that there should be established for their benefit regular courses of Lectures or Conferences by Catholic professors, in which Philosophy, History, and Religion were to be treated with amplitude and solidity. An Instruction, embodying this decision, was sent out by the Bishops of the Province of Westminster, 1 August, 1896. All that has been found practicable hitherto has been to assemble the Catholic Undergraduates on Sunday mornings by themselves in an Oratory, where Mass is said and half-an-hour's Conference addressed to them. These Conferences represent the Author's share in the work. They are now republished with some slight revision.

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OXFORD CONFERENCES,

LENT AND SUMMER TERMS, 1897.

CONFERENCE I.

THE TREATMENT OF HERETICS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, 31 January, 1897.

THERE is a remark in Ward's *Ideal of a Christian Church*, that by long continuance a Church comes to be held responsible for a vast amount of very questionable human conduct. Thus is the Catholic Church held to blame for scandalous deeds that her children have done, not a few in the course of ages. We underestimate the prejudice against her, created by the study of history. Men of curiosity and research, readers of original records, have unearthed numbers of uncanny facts about the doings of Catholics in the distant past, and judge us and our Church in the light of that past. For a Catholic is not subjected passively to the action of Catholicism, as corn is to the mill-stone that grinds it. We know by our own experience that we need to be personally active to make ourselves

what the Church would have us to be. This action is sometimes at least wanting on our part. For the failure we do not blame the Church but ourselves. We have not listened to the Church: therefore we are what we are, sinners. But the sin is our own doing, not the Church's. What is true of us, is true of every member of the Church, even the highest. The Pope, apart from his official holiness, has to make himself a holy man by his own personal effort. He may, as an individual, not hear the Church, and lead an un-Christian life, even as we may. There have been Popes, about as many as one can count on the fingers of one hand, whom the clear verdict of history pronounces to have led un-Christian lives. These scandals, coming of the misdeeds of individuals, should not shock us, who know that, Catholics as we are, we are but men, and terribly prone to fall away from the high ideals of the Catholic Church.

A greater difficulty is created by the Church's official action. It is undeniable that, in the middle ages, the Church did proceed officially against heretics with great severity, which in our days is called cruelty. There is a lurking suspicion in the mind of every Protestant, that if the Church had the power, and could afford to use it, there would be the like severity again, more torturings, and more burnings, of which Protestants would be the victims. On our side we say confidently and in all sincerity, that were the relative strengths of Catholic and Protestant in this country interchanged—were we as strong against them, and as able to burn and

torture them, as they are strong against us, and able, if they chose, still to burn and torture us—we should no more think of using our strength to any such purpose than they now think of using their preponderant strength to any purpose of such severity against Catholics. The faggot is extinguished, and the disembowelling knife thrown away, we hope for ever, on both sides.

But in the middle ages, and, we may say, even to the beginning of the present century, severity of punishment was the rule everywhere. It began in the school-room, it was evident in the camp, and the sentences of both lay and ecclesiastical judges continually exemplified it. It was aggravated rather than toned down by the Reformation. Terrible as was the punishment of heresy by burning, more terrible still was the punishment of treason by hanging, drawing, and quartering, the drawing (or disembowelling) being done on the man's body cut down alive. The burning of heretics was the act of the State at the instance of the Church, for an ecclesiastic never gave sentence of death; the hanging and drawing of traitors was the act of the State in its own cause. The former was meted out by Catholics to Catholics who had apostatised to Protestantism; the latter was the doom passed by Protestants upon Catholic priests and missionaries, whom they professed to view as traitors. Boiling alive for clipping the King's coin was practised as late as the reign of Charles II. Sentences of two thousand lashes for insubordination were passed upon soldiers at the beginning of this century.

We must not take the accident of a particular age or country for an essential of Catholicism. A divine edifice, but constructed of beings of flesh and blood, the Church must ever embody the various human characteristics of the human elements who compose it in this particular time or that particular place. In China the Church cannot in all things resemble the Church in England. English devotion is not Italian devotion, though its object and motive and even its spiritual intensity be the same. In an age when kings and lawyers, judges and juries agree, and all mankind expect, that crime must be visited with heavy retribution, and penalties made a terror to men tempted to offend, Churchmen will punish according to the notions of their times, more reluctantly than laymen, more justly, with longer inquiry, and more notice to the culprit, but when they are satisfied of his guilt, not less severely. As laymen hold their hand and strike more lightly, the Church willingly reverts to that gentleness and clemency in punishing which better becomes her.

It is the part of an educated man to be able mentally to throw himself into a state and condition of society long passed away, far distant, very different from that in which he actually lives. An ill-educated person cannot do this; he is narrow-minded, and he judges perversely of whatever does not come under his immediate experience and inspection. We need an effort to picture to ourselves a world in which all Western Europe was Catholic. If we believe in Christianity, if we wish

for its propagation, we must envy that unity of faith and regret its loss. Thanks to the rise of heresy, which culminated in the Reformation, India, China, Japan, countless races of men in Asia and Africa, remain un-Christianised, for Christianity appears to them as fragmentary and as divided against itself as their own religions. In Europe, the inheritance which the Reformers have bequeathed to posterity is the scepticism and unbelief which is the sign of our times. They who first brought in heresy upon undivided Christendom have much to answer for; they were the spoilers of the Church and of the Christian commonwealth; they were as a pestilence withering the growth of human society. Against these men as they first appeared, her own apostate children, the Church exercised her severities; and the Christian State, one partial aspect of the Christian Church, was concurrently severe.

But, unlike Mohammedanism, the Church has not made it her policy to bring into her fold by force those who never in their lives belonged to it. The Church is not responsible for the doings of every Catholic Sovereign, as of the Spanish kings against the Moors and Jews, or the *dragonnades* of Louis XIV. against the Huguenots, or the action taken against the Vaudois. The motive in those cases was a good deal political; there may have been also a mistaken religious zeal. But compulsory conversion, or forcible interference with the religion of those who never were Catholics, is not sanctioned by the standard theology of the Catholic Church,

nor by her customary practice. Thus St. Gregory the Great writes to restrain a bishop who was hindering the Jews from keeping their feasts: "They who differ from the Christian religion should be gathered in to the unity of the faith by mildness and kindness, by admonition and persuasion, lest they be repelled by threats and intimidation, who might have been invited to the faith by sweetness of preaching and the terror of the future judgment" (Epistles, i. 35). About apostate Catholics he uses very different language in a letter to Gennadius, Exarch of Africa: "Let Your Excellency put down their attempts, and crush their proud necks under the yoke of rectitude" (Epistles, i. 77).

St. Thomas follows exactly the same line as St. Gregory: "Of unbelievers, some there are who have never received the faith, as Gentiles and Jews. Such persons are on no account to be brought to the faith by compulsion, that they themselves should become believers, because believing is of the will; they are however, if possible, to be compelled by the faithful not to stand in the way of the faith by blasphemies, or evil persuasions, or open persecutions. And for this reason the faithful of Christ often make war on unbelievers, not to force them to believe, because, even though they had beaten them and got them prisoners, they would still leave them their choice whether they would believe or no, but for the purpose of compelling them not to put hindrances in the way of the faith of Christ. Other unbelievers there are who have at one time received the faith and professed it, as heretics, and

all manner of apostates. Such persons are to be compelled, even by corporal means, to fulfil what they have promised, and hold what they have once received. As to take a vow is voluntary, but to pay the vow is of necessity; so to receive the faith is a voluntary act, but it is of necessity to hold it, once received. And therefore heretics are to be compelled to hold the faith." So St. Thomas, 2a 2æ, q. 10. art. 8.; in my *Aquinas Ethicus*, i. 328, where the following note is appended: "The heretics whom the mediæval writers had in view were the heretics of their own time, *i.e.*, apostate Catholics. The Protestant of our day falls under St. Thomas's first class of unbelievers."

Argumentation is often thrown away, because your opponent has in reserve at the back of his mind a notion which he does not state, but which, if admitted, suffices completely to set aside whatever you advance against him. Now the common Protestant notion is that religion is matter of private judgment, matter of human opinion; that a man is not morally obliged to believe any particular point in religion any more than in chemistry; that he is free to choose his religious beliefs, as he accepts conclusions in physical science, partly on his own observation and his own reasoning, partly on the authority of men who seem to him trustworthy; but that whatever belief or opinion he holds, he is not morally accountable to God or to man for believing and thinking so. Such is the asserted right of private judgment, in its fulness. Of course it is not always asserted in its fulness, but often

with hazy and ill-defined limitations. In this view any religious opinions may be disseminated with impunity, provided it be without brawling and breach of the peace. Opinion against opinion has no chartered rights. There is no protection of opinions, but free trade of open discussion—with the one limitation just specified, that the peace of the city be not broken.

Among Catholics, however, in respect of the dogmas of the Church, it is not a question of opinions but of faith. A Catholic has no right to an opinion against his faith. He sins by making up his mind to think and believe the contradictory of that which his Church teaches him as of faith. Such contradiction is never honest, never excusable, except in one case, which may very possibly occur. It is the case of faith and reason giving way together, so that the man becomes of unsound mind. Faith is a habit of intellect. If the intellect fails and becomes diseased, it may be unable any longer to support faith. The man then becomes at once an unbeliever and a madman, and so irresponsible. But faith, once held, cannot be inculpably lost, unless reason is lost with it.

When the Catholic Church and the Catholic State went hand in hand, a man was not punished for the thoughts of his heart, if he kept them to himself; but if, being originally a baptized and professing Catholic, he proceeded to deny the Catholic faith, and to inculcate his denial upon others, he was first warned, admonished, and instructed; then, if he continued obstinate, the Church pronounced

him a heretic and contumacious, and handed him over to the State to suffer the extreme penalty of his heresy, contumacity, and apostasy. The penalty was dreadful and appalling, according to the spirit of the age. It was an age of strong convictions, deep sense of sin, and stern justice, habits of thought very opposite to the prevalent tone of our day.

The Church then as now did not enlarge her boundaries by compulsion; but she used force to maintain the *status quo* within the limits of her own obedience.

CONFERENCE II.

CHURCH AND STATE, IDEALS AND ACTUALITIES.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, 7 February, 1897.

In the Encyclical *Quanta Cura*, which prefaces the celebrated *Syllabus* of 1864, Pius IX. writes: "You know well, Venerable Brethren, that at this time there are found not a few men, who apply to civil society the impious and absurd principle of Naturalism, as they call it, and dare to teach that the best system of public society and the progress of civilisation altogether require that human society be constituted and governed without any regard to religion, as though religion did not exist, or at least without any distinction being made between the true and false religions. And, contrary to the teaching of Holy Writ, of the Church, and of the Holy Fathers, they hesitate not to assert that the best condition of society is that in which the Sovereign Power recognises no duty of restraining by statute penalties offenders against the Catholic religion, except so far as the public peace requires."

In the same Encyclical he condemns the doctrine, "that the Church is not competent by right to restrain with temporal penalties offenders against her laws." Three of the condemned propositions of the *Syllabus*, nn. 24, 77, 78, are on the same matter. Pius VI., in his Bull *Auctorem fidei*, con-

demns this among the other errors of the Jansenist Synod of Pistoia, that the Church has no proper means of enforcing obedience to her laws other than persuasion and spiritual censures. Leo X. condemned this proposition of Luther: "The burning of heretics is against the will of the Spirit:" a condemnation to which we must presently recur. Finally, not to multiply examples, Gregory XI. wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London: "Cause the said John Wycliffe by our authority to be arrested and committed to prison" (Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii. 116).

These are instances enough to teach us that we must not go about to defend the Church by asserting that all severities exercised on heretics, as such, were excesses of the Civil Power, or here and there of misguided ecclesiastics. That were to abandon a position taken up by long lines of Popes down to the present day. And a well-read antagonist would quickly bring us to book, and ask whether he is to take us or the Pope as the accepted exponent of Catholicism. *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis.*

As the Popes, so theologians, led by St. Thomas, who writes thus on the question, "Are heretics to be tolerated?" "With regard to heretics two elements are to be considered, one element on their side, and the other on the part of the Church. On their side is the sin whereby they have deserved, not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be banished from the world by death. For it is a much heavier offence to corrupt the faith, whereby the life of the soul is sustained,

than to tamper with the coinage, which is an aid to temporal life. Hence if coiners, or other malefactors, are at once handed over by secular princes to die a just death, much more may heretics, immediately they are convicted of heresy, be not only excommunicated, but also justly done to die. But on the part of the Church is mercy in view of the conversion of them that err; and therefore she does not condemn at once, but *after the first and second admonition*, as the Apostle teaches (Titus iii. 10). After that, however, if the man is still found pertinacious, the Church, having no hope of his conversion, provides for the safety of others, cutting him off from the Church by the sentence of excommunication; and further she leaves him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated from the world by death" (*Summa*, 2a 2æ, q. 11. art. 3.; *Aquinas Ethicus*, I. 333).

There is much here to offend those who are too ignorant to know, or too prejudiced to take account of, the peculiar state of society for which these things are written, and of which alone they are true. Pius IX. wrote of an ideal state of things, "the best system of public society." St. Thomas lived in the thirteenth century, in what was to some extent an ideal state of things, when, but for the Albigenses in the south of France, the Greek schism at Constantinople, and the Mohammedan power in Spain, all Europe was Catholic. Where all are Catholics, there should be a close union of Church and State. The Civil Law and the Canon Law should support one another. Canonical sentences

upon ecclesiastical offenders should be enforced by the civil courts, where the offender proves contumacious, and the Church seeks the support of the secular arm. As the Prince Bishop of Durham, Richard Kellawe, wrote, or one of his lawyers wrote for him in his secular capacity: "Our royal power ought not to fail Holy Church in her complaints" (*Registrum Dunelmense*, Rolls Series, i. 166). Hence the punishment of a contumacious apostate, even by death, is not in all cases against the Spirit of God. That such punishment took the terrible form of burning, is to be set down to the severity of bygone times, in all cases, civil, ecclesiastical, and even domestic, as we remarked in the former Conference. Thus Luther's proposition: "The burning of heretics is against the will of the Spirit," contained an element of untruth at the time, quite enough to warrant its condemnation. Propositions are constantly condemned at Rome, not because Roman authority wishes to authorise their contradictories, but for being rash, mischievous, partially untrue, or untrue at least in the sense of their authors, as were many of the propositions of the Jansenists.

Besides the ideal relation of Church and State, which perhaps obtains nowhere at the present day, we may observe two other relations which have actually obtained The one we should pronounce intolerable, the other tolerable. It is intolerable, when a Christian Sovereign takes upon himself to manage the Church in his dominions. The most conspicuous instance is the ecclesiastical meddling

of the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria, whom Frederick the Great nicknamed "my brother, the sacristan." Hence the name "Josephism." Josephism gave infinite annoyance to Pius VI. and to the Church. Other instances are found in the conduct of sundry Bourbon Kings, or their Ministers. The suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773 was an effect of this policy. Earlier instances of it are found in the ecclesiastical policy of the sons of Constantine at Rome, and of almost the whole line of Emperors at Constantinople.

When Josephism is the alternative, the watchword of Lacordaire and Lamennais, "a free Church in a free State," represents a very delightful settlement, or *modus vivendi*. That the watchword found little favour at Rome, was because it was there taken to be put forward as the expression of an ideal of perfection. The condition of mutual non-intervention between Church and State is not ideal. The ideal is a wholly Catholic State; and from a wholly Catholic State the Church has a right to expect more than mere toleration and liberty. But the ideal is hardly to be had in the world of politics. We are not citizens of wholly Catholic States, and we must not clamour for their privileges. It is enough for us in England and America that Catholics are free, as all other citizens are free, to practise the religion that pleases them, on the condition of neither suffering nor giving annoyance in its exercise. This is our actual condition, tolerable enough; indeed, as things go, it is matter of much thankfulness.

The world is greatly changed since St. Thomas wrote, and first in "the formation of heretical bodies of long standing, the individual members of which, never having professed the Catholic faith, and being ignorant of it, and from infancy prejudiced against it, cannot without distinction be called heretics" (Translator's note, *Aquinas Ethicus*, I. 332).

The enactments of temporal penalties against heresy in the middle ages have no application to the members of these bodies. Were the population of England and Wales to consist, on the 1st of January next, of twenty-eight millions of Catholics, and two millions of Protestants, sole remnants of Anglicanism and Nonconformity, the Catholics would have no manner of right, divine or human, to use any sort of coercion or penal infliction for the drawing of those Protestants into the Catholic Church, or for hindering them from practising their own forms of religion.

The note just quoted remarks yet another change: "the irritation set up in modern minds at the sight of men punished for opinions, whether political or religious: a fact that the Church would have to reckon with, even if she had might on her side, and consider whether it would be prudent in her nowadays to visit heresy with all the ancient penalties, for the Church's punishments are medicinal, and the same medicine does not suit every age and condition of society."

The question for any public authority, ecclesiastical or civil, in punishing, is not what retribution the delinquent deserves to suffer—that must be left

to God—but how much of the suffering that he deserves it is expedient to inflict upon him as a deterrent to the rest of the community from imitating his example. Now punishment ceases to operate as a deterrent, first, when the scandal of the offence is greater than the punishment can remove —*e.g.*, a murder committed by a clergyman gives a shock to the public conscience, which is not made up by the detection and hanging of such a murderer; secondly, when the punishment creates sympathy for the culprit. Whoever dies with a halo of martyrdom about him, advances the cause for which he dies, even though it be a false halo and an evil cause. This consideration, borne out by experience of the past and by the known temper of men at the present day, may be relied upon also in the future effectually to deter the Catholic Church, in any ideal relation with the State, and in any plenitude of power, from ever repeating the severities of the middle ages upon her apostate children.

It was only apostate Catholics, and they contumacious, who were ever canonically consigned to the punishment of death. There was one schismatical and heretical community side by side with the Catholic Church in the days of her secular preponderance. That was the Greek Church, separated from Rome by the schism of Photius. But there is no instance, I believe, in mediæval history of any Greek being condemned to death by process of law, or suffering any legal penalty whatever, for denying the supremacy of the Pope, or the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son.

CONFERENCE III.

THE EXTENSION OF SALVATION.

Septuagesima Sunday, 14 February, 1897.

WITH the severity of the Church against heretics in this world, we have dealt. We are now to deal with the far greater severity that is charged upon her in regard of the world to come, that of pointing to everlasting fire as the destiny of the great majority of mankind.

We will lay down at starting three propositions that are of faith.

1. Whoever dies in the state of grace, is quite certain to see God in Heaven for all eternity, although that vision may be delayed by his having to suffer for a time in Purgatory.

2. Whoever dies in the state of mortal sin, goes straight to Hell for ever.

3. "God wishes all men to be saved" (1 Timothy ii. 4). "God rejoices not in the perdition of the living" (Wisdom i. 13).

This wish of God for the salvation of all mankind is called the "salvific will." It is a will real, but not absolute; it is conditioned on the co-operation of men themselves, and also on the ordinary course of nature: God will not work a miracle to secure baptism for a dying child, nor

let Lazarus carry the rich man's message from Hell to his five brothers (St.Luke xvi. 27—31). Along with this will goes the fact of the death of Christ for all mankind. It was the Jansenist heresy, that He died for a portion of mankind, only for the elect.

But as to what proportion of men die in sanctifying grace, and what proportion in mortal sin, nothing is revealed, nothing is of faith, and nothing is really known by theologians. If ever you find a theologian confidently consigning the mass ot human souls to eternal flames, be sure that he is venturing beyond the bounds of Christian faith and of theological science. You are quite free to disbelieve his word. I do not believe it myself.

As for such Scripture sayings as that "many are called, but few are chosen" (St. Matt. xxii. 14), they are a matter of immense debate, into which we shall not enter. Our Saviour would not gratify the curiosity of him who asked: "Are there few saved?" (St. Luke xiii. 23).

It is true that older theologians take a very gloomy view on this subject, holding it, not as of faith, but as their conclusion from premises of faith. In an age when men freely gave over one another to torture and death, they did not look for any wide and far-reaching final mercy of God upon the sins of humanity, multitudinous then as now, and needing great mercy. Still they spoke in excess of their knowledge, and in excess of their faith. We must not be dogmatic in supporting the contrary side. We have no more revelation than they had. Still

we may opine and conjecture and argue for greater leniency. The rigorism of the older theologians culminated in Jansenism. To the Jansenist, the elect were *the few grapes left upon the vine after a careful vintage* (Isaias xxiv. 13). Since the extirpation of Jansenism the pendulum of theological speculation has swung the other way, and theologians generally hope more of the mercy of God, or at least speak with less assurance of the range of His rigorous justice.

When we look at men as they live upon earth, and endeavour to take some augury of the lot that awaits them hereafter, the first danger that we see threatening their salvation is want of faith. *Without faith it is impossible to please God* (Hebrews xi. 6). Wilfully to reject the measure of divine faith offered to you is to incur damnation. But what measure of divine faith is offered to various individuals and races of men, we are unable to discern; still less can we judge of their rejection or acceptance of it. St. Thomas says of one who disbelieves: "If he is not pertinacious in his disbelief [if he does not obstinately hold back from embracing the faith, when it is put fairly within his view], he is in that case no heretic, but only a man in error" (2a 2æ, q. 5. art. 3). And again, on the question whether unbelief is a sin: "Unbelief may be understood in two ways; in one way as a mere negation, so that a man is called an unbeliever simply from not having the faith. In another way, unbelief may be understood as signifying contrary opposition to the faith, whereby one stands out against the hearing of

the faith or even despises faith; and in this the proper and perfect essence of unbelief consists; and thus understood, unbelief is a sin. But if it is taken for a pure negation, as in those who have heard nothing of the faith [or, whatever they have heard, have never had the faith properly brought to their notice], it has not the character of a sin, but rather of a penalty, inasmuch as such ignorance of divine things is a consequence of the sin of our first parent. Unbelievers of this class are damned for other sins that cannot be forgiven without faith, but they are not damned for the sin of unbelief" (2a 2æ, q. 10. art. 1).

On this last remark of St. Thomas, as it is read in *Aquinas Ethicus*, i. 324, 325, I am responsible for the following Translator's note: "The hardest thing in the condition of men who have not the true faith is the difficulty of getting any grievous sin forgiven them. Still there may be, nay, there must be, channels of divine mercy, open to all men of good will." That note I now propose to follow up.

The word *damnation* in a technical sense does not involve hell-fire. It applies to children and others who die unbaptized without ever attaining to the use of reason. Technically, all these persons are damned, inasmuch as, in penalty of original sin in them unforgiven, they are deprived of that vision of God for which man was created. Yet theologians represent them as suffering no pain, and having everything in the natural order to make them happy, including some inferior knowledge and love of God. They are *in limbo*, on the margin of

Hell (*limbus*, hence our word *Limbo*), but feel not its fires. There must be millions of human souls in this position.

Thereupon hangs a further question: what is to become at death of an unbaptized adult, who has never committed anything that was in him a mortal sin? Various answers have been returned by St. Thomas and others. The fact is, we do not know the answer, and can only answer on conjecture. But there is a likely and plausible conjecture of some theologians to this effect, that such souls finally pass to the Limbo of unbaptized children. When we consider the almost infinite stupidity and ignorance and delusion that has obtained among heathen nations, under the shelter of which many a well-meaning blockhead or blunderer may have escaped at least formal mortal sin, it is difficult to reckon the millions of human souls who on this merciful conjecture would be damned indeed, technically speaking, and lost for original sin, but not condemned to eternal flames nor deprived of natural happiness.

It must be observed that two classes of persons are excluded from this conjecture, and can never be consigned to the children's Limbo; all persons who by baptism or otherwise have ever been in the state of sanctifying grace, and all who have ever committed what was in them a mortal sin. The reason is, because on the one hand sanctifying grace is a title to heaven, which can be only forfeited by mortal sin; and on the other hand, mortal sin is a debt of everlasting fire, which can

only be cancelled by the reception of sanctifying grace.

Mortal sin among the heathen, whether of ancient or modern times, is terrible to think of in this particular, that we cannot well say how it should be forgiven. The heathen did many things that would be mortal sins in us, but possibly had some excuse in their ignorance. But they also did things which they themselves knew to be very wrong and exceedingly wicked. At Athens, or in any city of old, men were pointed at by their contemporaries as belonging to a "bad set." How ever could these men have found forgiveness? So far as we know, mortal sin is only forgiven by the infusion of sanctifying grace, and sanctifying grace supposes faith. What faith had the pagans? What could they have?

These are questions to which we can return no definite answer. But our ignorance is no reason for our consigning men to Hell in nations, Egyptians and Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, the friends of Cicero, the companions of Socrates, all to be lost. If there is one thing clear in Holy Writ, it is that God will not take men to Heaven in shoals, as belonging to a particular nation or class or locality, but each man shall be judged on his individual merits. And as of salvation, so also of condemnation. The angels *shall separate the wicked from the midst of the just* (St. Matt. xiii. 49): shall they not also find out and distinguish just men everywhere in the midst of the wicked? God is more ready to save than to condemn. He wishes the salvation

of all; His Divine Son died for all, the condition of access to God, prescribed in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 6)—*He that approaches God must believe that he is, and that he is a giver of reward to them that seek him*—is possible to all. Among the ancient Greeks, and other heathen nations, we find a distinct idea of sacrifice for the remission of sin. How God forgave these men their sins, it is not for us to say; but neither have we any right to say that He never did forgive them, or that, infants and simpletons excepted, He consigned the heathen peoples generally to the Hell of fire.

For baptized persons, not belonging to the visible fold of the Catholic Church, heaven is their assured position, if they die without ever having offended God by mortal sin. Such a sin would be, for instance, their seeing the duty of entering that visible fold, and still refusing to enter. If in any way they do sin mortally, they are at a decided disadvantage as compared with Catholics, in not having access to the Sacrament of Penance, and in being commonly ill instructed in the way how to make an act of contrition. An act of perfect contrition, or sorrow for sin for the love of God, is their sole way of recovering His grace and obtaining pardon; and this way often they hardly know. Still some of them know it; and God's merciful inspiration may lead others into it, ere they die. When the late Dr. Magee was apparently dying at Peterborough, we read in his Life how solicitous he was in repeating acts of sorrow for sin and having the Anglican form of absolution read over him. After

the Bull, *Apostolicæ Curæ*, we cannot place confidence in the sacramental value of that absolution; but of the value of those acts of contrition we may feel confident. A baptized man, who is not a Catholic, is not worse off for facilities of obtaining pardon than a Jew under the Old Law; and the Jews were God's chosen people. If you have an Anglican friend whose inner life you can influence, get him to pray, get him to make acts of contrition, get him to do works of mercy—for works of mercy go to make final impenitence an impossibility.

Father Faber has written on the *easiness of salvation* for Catholics. A number of his pages have recently been reprinted under this title. This sound and able theologian, and holy and experienced priest, held strongly to the opinion, that of Catholics, who are such more than in mere name, the vast majority are saved. Of other men he was not so confident.

Still to all men God is good. If we can discover excuses, He will discern them all and more. If He has been so good and indulgent to us, to others also we may expect that He will be good and indulgent in ways that are to us unsearchable. We may surely apply to His dealings that Greek saying: "What I have understood is excellent; so also, I take it, is what I have not understood"—*ἃ μὲν συνῆκα γενναῖα, οἶμαι δὲ καὶ ἃ μὴ συνῆκα.* But we must know, a great deal depends on Catholics as vehicles of salvation to other men. A Catholic whose life repels his acquaintance from his religion, will find one day that he has much to answer for.

That servant who knew the will of his lord, and prepared not, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more (St. Luke xii. 47, 48).

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CONFERENCE IV.

THE INCARNATION AND THE CHURCH, OR THE NATURAL AND THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST.

Sexagesima Sunday, 21 February, 1897.

CHRIST is Head of the Church, the Church is His Body, and we are members of the Church and members of Christ. This is no mere metaphor. It is not figurative language, such as we use when we speak of the head and members of a college. The connection of us Christian men with Christ is so close, the union so intimate, that our best way of expressing it is to speak of it in terms of the union that obtains between the head and limbs of a living body.

In the Incarnation the Eternal Son of God united Himself with one humanity that thereby He might be united with all humanity. The Incarnation wrought no change in God, and brought Him no gain. It was "for us men and our salvation." It was for all men, not merely for that one human soul which He created for Himself, and that one human body which He formed for Himself from the flesh of the Blessed Virgin Mary; not merely, I say, for that one human nature which He assumed to Himself. He took that nature to Himself in what is called an *hypostatic union*, or a union of two natures in one person; so that God was Man and

Man was God. The hands and feet of that Man, His flesh and His blood, were the flesh and the blood, the hands and feet of God, and adorable with the adoration that is due to God. What that Man did and suffered, God did and suffered, as Man. And, as God, that Man was able to say: *Before Abraham was, I am* (St. John viii. 58).

Our union with Jesus Christ is not hypostatic, we are not one person with Him. But it is a union of that closeness which ranks next to hypostatic union. Understand, I speak of the normal Christian, the baptized man who is in the visible communion of the Catholic Church, and who is also in the state of grace. Were I to speak of the Catholic who is living in mortal sin, or of the baptized man who is separated from the visible communion of the Catholic Church, I should have to speak with many reservations, limitations, and distinctions, which I will not now use, because I am speaking of none of these persons.

The union of Jesus Christ, God and Man, with the rest of mankind is effected by Baptism. We may consider some of the texts of the New Testament in which this union is described—remembering that these texts mean exactly what is said in them, that they are not to be explained away, or "the meaning got out of them," in the sense of their being sucked dry of all meaning that any one need care to attend to, a process not uncommon in a certain school of Scripture interpreters. St. Paul then says to the Corinthians, ordinary Christians enough, full of faults, as his Epistles show, and

dwelling in a city as corrupt as any in the Roman Empire: *Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ?* (1 Cor. vi. 15). *You are the body of Christ, and members of member*, or taking the more intelligible reading, ἐκ μέρους, *members each in his part* (1 Cor. xii. 29). And to the Ephesians: *We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones* (Ephes. v. 30). And again to the same, *hath made him head over all the church, which is his body, the fulness of him*, &c. (Ephes. i. 23). The word πλήρωμα, translated *fulness*, means of course *complement;* it is used of a ship's *complement* or *crew*, without which the vessel is incomplete. So Christ, the Head of the Church, is incomplete without the Church His Body. "For if He is the Head, we the members, the whole man is He and we," says St. Augustine (tr. 21 in Joan.). The same is the signification of our Lord's own words: *I am the vine, you the branches*, &c. (St. John xv. 1—8).

We can tell, though very imperfectly, some of the things which this union with Christ means. It means that, as Christ is the Eternal Son of God by nature, so we receive *the adoption of sons* (Galat. iv. 5). Adopted into a patrician house, according to Roman law, a plebeian became a patrician. Adopted sons of God, we are *made partakers of the divine nature* (2 St. Peter i. 9). We can call God properly our Father (cf. St. John xx. 17), whereas by nature and creation He is our Lord, and we His servants. As children, we have a right to God's inheritance, which is God Himself, and to God's own happiness, which is the vision and sight of

God; whereas a meaner knowledge of God and a humbler happiness for eternity is all that can be claimed by the best-behaved of creatures, as such.

There was in the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Solomon a peculiar brightness, called the *shechinah*, the visible sign of God's presence and favour in that spot (cf. 3 Kings viii. 10—12). The *shechinah*, to the Christian man, is the Holy Ghost dwelling in his soul and in his body, making of him a temple (1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16), even as Jesus Christ was *anointed with the Holy Ghost and power* (Acts x. 38).

Baptism, which effects this union with Christ, makes men capable of receiving the other six sacraments, which without it would be invalid, even the greatest of them all, the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. You may put the Blessed Sacrament anywhere, and give it to any one: but unless the person receiving it be baptized, he does not receive it as a sacrament; he is incapable of the sacramental union, as would be a dumb animal.

When we add the title to a glorious resurrection of the body, for of Christ it is written that, *it was impossible for him to be held fast by death* (Acts ii. 24), and a similar impossibility extends to His members —we have completed our brief survey of the privileges that go with membership of the mystical Body of Christ, which is His Church. It follows that a Christian is something more than man. He is *not of this world*, as Christ also was *not of this world*, not only standing aloof from its vices and follies, but belonging to an order of existence im-

measurably above it. The text of the Psalm (lxxxi. 6), *I have said, ye are gods,* our Lord Himself explains to mean: *He calls them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken* (St. John x. 35), and who have believed and been baptized. (St. Mark xvi. 16).

This high estate of a Christian is quite consistent with his being knocked and tossed about in this rough world, and feeling at times exceedingly small, helpless, unfortunate, foolish, and contemptible. He is on his trial here, in a state of probation. He is like his Lord, who, God as He was, *in the days of his flesh put forth prayers with a strong cry and tears, and learned obedience from what he suffered* (Hebrews vi. 7, 8); who had *to suffer and so enter into his glory* (St. Luke xxiv. 26). A child under age is kept out of the enjoyment of his fortune; so, says St. John, *we are now children of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be* (1 St. John iii. 2).

In His natural Body our Lord was visible during the term of His mortal life on earth. He went about, a man amongst men: all could see Him and know Him as man. His Divinity was unseen, though He gave indications of it, as He chose, by word and work. It was apprehended by faith. So is the mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church, a visible society on the earth, conspicuous to all the world as a society and an institution, at the same time declaring herself by her acts and her teaching to be more than a human institution. That she is the mystical Body of which Christ is the Head, is a truth of faith to us members of that Body.

CONFERENCE V.

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE.

Quinquagesima Sunday, 28 February, 1897.

THE Christian, we have seen, is something more than man. What makes the man in him is natural virtue; what makes that something more than man, which is the Christian man, is supernatural virtue. Natural virtue is made up of the four cardinal virtues, which were recognised and more or less practised by the Greeks. The three theological virtues constitute supernatural virtue. The supernatural is not identical with the divine; for man is referred to God even in the natural order, and in that order worships God as known to him by reason, which worship is an act of the virtue of religion, of itself a natural virtue.

All the virtues described in Aristotle's *Ethics* are merely natural. And yet, as a blind man groping may come near a treasure without knowing it, so Aristotle all unconsciously comes near to the distinction between supernatural and natural virtue in the following passage: "Such a life will be too good for man: for not as he is man will he so live, but inasmuch as there is a divine element in his composition. As much as this element excels the compound into which it enters, so much does the

act of the said element excel any act in any other line of virtue. If then the understanding [say, the habit of sanctifying grace] is divine in comparison with man, the life of the understanding [of sanctifying grace] is divine in comparison with human life. We must not take the advice of those who tell us that, being man, one should cherish the thoughts of a man, or being mortal, the thoughts of a mortal, but so far as in us lies, we must play the immortal, and do all in our power to live by the best element in our nature: for though that element be slight in quantity, in power and in value it far outweighs all the rest of our being. . . . There is a second-rate happiness in the life of the other kind of virtue: for the acts of virtue of that kind are human. Acts of justice, fortitude, and the like, are done according to the virtues of social life, in contracts and on emergencies and in transactions of all kinds, and also in the government of the passions, observing the measure of decorum in each case" (*Ethics*, X. cc. vii. viii.).

There is, as we know better than Aristotle, a virtue that is human, or natural, and a virtue that is superhuman and supernatural, and each kind of virtue brings its corresponding happiness. Natural virtue has its reward in this world. It is the virtue of empire-making peoples, of the ancient Romans, and of our own imperial selves. England is a home of the natural virtues. They have grown in modern times. Thus justice has so far grown, and crimes of violence have diminished, that one can now travel in safety without the armed retinue which our

ancestors required. Besides social happiness on earth, natural virtue leads (in a certain order of Providence other than the present) to a measure of human happiness everlasting—such happiness as theologians suppose unbaptized infants to enjoy. Supernatural virtue leads to the happiness of Heaven, as Heaven actually is, the sight of God face to face, which is called the "beatific vision"—a happiness not due to any creature as such, but due to all who at the end of their probation are found in possession of that gratuitous and greatest gift of God, sanctifying grace.

Natural virtue is founded on reason, supernatural virtue on faith. Natural virtue refers us to human society, and to God simply as Creator. Supernatural virtue refers us to Jesus Christ our Saviour, and to His Church.

The deepest spiritual loss perhaps that the Reformation has finally entailed upon England is the loss of the sense of the supernatural. No doubt, the supernatural doctrine of the Atonement was preserved by the Reformers, and the Sacrament of Baptism, and some ideas of grace—ideas which last century were more cherished among Dissenters than in the Church of England: but even this remnant of gold has grown dim, and a vast body of our countrymen may now be described as brave and enterprising, fair-minded, public-spirited, truthful, courteous, faithful to family and friends, but indifferent to creeds, and therefore to faith, *having no hope of the promise*, thoughtless about forgiveness of sin—in short, *without Christ*,

and almost *without God in this world* (Ephes. iii. 12). And here, I believe, we light upon the great danger that threatens a young Catholic at Oxford. There are dangers everywhere on earth, dangers at a Catholic school: dangers there were for one living at Rome in the days of Papal dominion. So it is not surprising if life at this University has its own peculiar danger; and that consists, not in anything that you hear from Lecturers and Tutors, not in attacks made by your equals upon your religion, but in that urbanity and courtesy, and gaiety and good-humour, and truth and friendship, and vigour of mind and body, in that host of natural virtues which you admire in the society around you, all independent, it appears, of the grace of Christ and the faith and sacraments of His Church. Then the question arises in the heart: "What is the need of faith and sacraments and the restraints of Catholic belief and practice, when such fair gifts are to be had without them? Who wants more than what he can find here, where the Church is not?" Some one once said: "The virtues of the Catholic clergy are more dangerous than their vices:" meaning, more likely to attract to what he considered the pernicious errors of Popery. If everywhere beyond the Catholic pale you found nothing but loathsome vice, you would fly back upon your religion in horror, and cling to your faith for preservation. As it is, the natural goodness that you see flourishing without the Catholic faith, is a snare and a temptation. Some power behind it seems to cry: "All these things

I will give thee, if thou wilt resign thy part in Christ and thine inheritance in the Son of Mary." Against this temptation I will suggest some considerations.

And first I would not have you too readily acquiesce in the notion, that the virtue, which you admire in any particular instance is all a growth of mere nature, and that the grace of Christ has no part in forming it. The person in whom you see it has probably been baptized, he prays, he calls on the Holy Name, he looks to His Saviour's Blood for the forgiveness of his sins: altogether his goodness may rest on a supernatural groundwork, which he is shy of revealing to you; for men are coy and shy of revealing what is dearest and holiest in their composition. And though he be an out and out heathen, which is not likely, yet, living in this land, he cannot fail to be influenced by the presence of the Catholic Church in the midst of our civilisation. All other forms of religion amongst us are ever rivalling the true Church of Christ, copying her, as they can afford to do, impressed by her, overawed by her, checked and guided by her. And religious people generally react upon, sober and restrain men of no religion. Thus the streams of the supernatural flow everywhere, and help to fertilise even the wastes of paganism.

Then you have to remember that the men about you are not voluntarily turning their backs on the supernatural, as a Catholic would do were he to abandon the practice of his religion. Other men's graces have been faint and few. If they have

imbibed little of the supernatural, it is because little has come before them. Were the Catholic to aim at being simply as they, he would not be a copy of them, he would be a worse man far. Nothing so bad as a bad Catholic, or so good as a good one.

Then we want a virtue that will last. Life is long enough sorely to try and well-nigh to wear out any virtue that a young man can possess himself of. The natural modesty, kindliness, and truthfulness, that has carried one through school and college, may wither and perish under the heat and trial of twenty years in India. It is most desirable, therefore, to undergird all our natural virtues with supernatural motives, to be just not from mere love of fair-play, to be pure not out of mere sense of decency, but likewise for the fear of Him who is Searcher of hearts and Judge, and the love of Him who *feedeth among the lilies*.

There remains one great and cogent reason for the practice of supernatural virtue: it is that after death God will admit none but the supernaturally holy to the feast of His heavenly Kingdom. To be presented at Court, you must wear court-dress. It will not do to plead that the costume of every day life is good enough for you: the King will not see you so, nor shall you see Him except in His anger.

I end with a story of King John, a clear illustration of what I have called the peculiar danger of Oxford. King John, you know, was born here in the old palace which stood where now is

Beaumont Street. Oxford in those days was in the diocese of Lincoln, ruled over by St. Hugh of Lincoln, who gave John many admonitions, not wholly uncalled for. We read in the *Vita Magna Sancti Hugonis* (Rolls Series) how John once out hunting killed a fine fat buck. The animal was laid at his feet. The King admired his glossy coat and sleek flanks: then, turning to his courtiers, he said: "See how fat he is, how well he has fared: yet he never heard a Mass." *How fat he is!* or *how good he is!* it matters not which, *yet he never heard a Mass!*

CONFERENCE VI.

THE CHURCH AND THE BIBLE.

First Sunday in Lent, 7 March, 1897.

"YES, Phaedrus, there is this inconvenience in written composition: in fact it is like painting. The creations of the painter's art stand and look as if alive: but if you ask them a question, they keep a most solemn silence. And books in the same way. You might fancy they spoke as themselves understanding what they say: but if you ask a question about any of their statements in a spirit of inquiry, the book has only one indication to give, one and the same always. Once written, every book circulates as well among competent readers as among those who are quite alien to its spirit. It has not the wit to speak to proper persons only, and not to others. Ill practised upon and unjustly railed against, it stands in constant need of the aid of its parent. It is unable to defend or succour itself" (Plato, *Phaedrus*, 275).

We do not get our legal guidance from "open statutes," nor cure our ailments for ourselves at "open dispensaries," nor is our religion to be derived simply from "open Bibles." We need a living authority to apply the law, to dispense the medicine, to interpret the Bible.

We read in the Bible itself of difficulties in the way of understanding it. *In the which (epistles of our dear brother Paul) are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction* (2 St. Peter iii. 16). One practical difficulty is to know whether certain precepts, as that of washing feet (St. John xiii. 14, 15), or of not resisting evil (St. Matt. v. 39), are to be taken in what appears to be their obvious sense or not; or again, whether we are still bound to *abstain from blood and things strangled* (Acts xv. 29). We want some authority outside the Bible to tell us.

The Catholic Church fully recognises the assistance which the Holy Spirit gives to all who read the Bible with a devout mind and a sincere purpose of finding God in those inspired pages—and that not only in the case of Catholics, but of all men. The Church also, within the limits of her dogmatic decisions, allows a vast liberty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Bible. The Fathers of the Church, and Catholic commentators subsequent to the Fathers, differ among themselves widely as to the interpretation of particular texts, not as to points of faith, but as to what point of faith is or is not contained in this or that text, *e.g.*, 1 Cor. xv. 51. But what the Catholic Church cannot allow is either that the Holy Ghost, speaking to the individual soul, is the one guide to the interpretation of Scripture, or that private judgment is the one guide. She maintains that the power which our Lord had and exercised upon earth of inter-

preting the Scriptures (St. Luke iv. 21; xxiv 27), He has since His Ascension committed to her. Accordingly she began to exercise it from the very day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 14—36; iii. 12—26). Whenever she rules the sense of any passage of Scripture (*e.g.*, of St. John xx. 23), she rules it infallibly.

Thus God follows the great rule of His Providence, providing for man through man, not only in temporal matters, in which every good gift that we have becomes available to us as members of human society, and through the co-operation of our fellowmen, and not otherwise—but also in the needs of our soul and in matters of salvation. Whoever wilfully and wittingly rejects the guidance of the Church, rejects also the guidance of the Holy Ghost in his reading of Scripture. It is notorious that such headstrong men have put out the most opposite interpretations, all professing to be guided by the same Holy Spirit. As for private judgment, it is a sheer impossibility for men generally to search the Scriptures and find there a religion for themselves. They simply have not the time. They can no more be their own Bible-expounders and their own religious teachers, than they can be their own lawyers, physicians, engineers. They must walk by human faith, if they have not divine. Away from the guidance of the infallible Church, men drink in their Bible lore from the lips of some favourite preacher, some Pope of their own election, some good man to whom they have handed over their spirituality. In this busy world there is nothing else to be done.

About Bible-reading. The Church does not approve of editions of the Bible in the mother tongue without notes. Uninstructed readers of such a book as the Bible do need notes. If you find a man reading his Æschylus without a commentary, you presume that he has already attended lectures and had the benefit of many commentaries. Otherwise he may misunderstand his author, and suffer accordingly, if he presents it in the Schools. How does he know even that he has got the right text? A clever man will edit a Greek play, reconstruct the entire plot, surprise you with new readings and novel constructions put upon old readings: if you were familiar with the play before, you hardly recognise it as it emerges from his hands. Men have been equally adventurous in dealing with sundry portions of Scripture. As faith in the revelation of Christ is of more importance than any accuracy of knowledge required for examination purposes, and as a perverse understanding of Scripture may mean a perversion of faith, the Church does well in providing safeguards for her uninstructed children when they open the sacred volume—*knowing this*, as St. Peter says, *that no prophecy of Scripture is matter of private interpretation* (*privata interpretatione non fit*, says the Vulgate, which is explained by the Greek ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται), *for prophecy came not by the will of man at any time, but the holy men of God spoke inspired by the Holy Ghost* (2 St. Peter i. 20), and therefore must be read by the light of the Holy Ghost, which is given through the Church.

The Bible is a collection of books that vary greatly in style and matter. The Epistles of St. Paul are not like the Canticle of Canticles; there is much difference between St. Luke and the Apocalypse. For the ordinary Christian, some books are much more profitable reading than others. The first thing is to know well the four Gospels, to be well acquainted with the story of all that our Lord did, suffered, and said. This concerns us much more than the vicissitudes of Israel under the Judges, or the succession of the Kings of Juda. In the Old Testament, the "Sapiential Books," Proverbs, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, form good ground for a beginner. It is well to know the Messianic prophecies. The latter half of Isaias will commonly do the reader more good than Leviticus. St. Paul needs a commentator.

The Bible forms the theme of Christian meditation, Christian preaching, and Christian art: it is also the staple of the liturgy of the Church. It is a book to be meditated, and not gabbled over. It is the meditation-book of those who practice mental prayer. An hour's meditation on twenty verses will often teach us more of the inner mind of the Bible than many hours spent in Biblical criticism. It is possible to be a great Biblical critic, and have scarce any inward knowledge of the Bible at all: just as a foreigner in a continental city may write an erudite work on Oxford, with less real understanding of the University than an undergraduate who has kept two terms.

Holy Scripture is meant to be explained from

the pulpit. So it was explained by the Doctors of the Church. We have their Homilies still, notably, those of St. John Chrysostom on Genesis, on the Psalms, on St. Matthew, on the Epistles of St. Paul. At the Gesù in Rome there is, or was, an institution called the "Scripture Lecture." When the Church is well on her feet in England, we hope to have a Scripture Lecture regularly delivered in some church in every large town.

The laity knew their Bible in the middle ages by seeing its histories carved in stone or wood, painted on the walls of churches, or in windows of stained glass. The Cathedral of Chartres, so numerous are its Biblical sculptures, has been called "a Bible in stone." The clergy of the middle ages and of the Catholic Church to-day knew and still know great portions of the Bible from the Missal and the Breviary. Except the Hymns, Collects, and some of the Lessons, the Breviary is nearly all Bible. A priest saying his Office, if asked what he was doing, might well reply: "I am reading the Bible." Luther had been for years daily conversant with Missal and Breviary, when he made his notable "discovery" of the Bible in his convent library. What else he found, I know not: but he certainly did not find there the written Word of God for the first time.

I do not know, but I suspect that the average Catholic layman before the Reformation was better acquainted with the Old and New Testament than he is now, man for man, and class for class. The insane extravagances of Protestantism seem to

have driven Catholics into the opposite extreme. Because "the Bible and the Bible only" has been proclaimed to be "the religion of Protestants," we have shrunk too much from the Sacred Volume, which is ours by inheritance. Or is it that we have become less biblical as our devotion has grown less liturgical? A more widely diffused knowledge and appreciation of the Missal, of the Breviary, and of the Bible, is a thing devoutly to be wished for in the Catholic laity of the present day.

CONFERENCE VII.

INSPIRATION AND HISTORICAL ACCURACY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Second Sunday in Lent, 14 March, 1897.

In what I am about to say I have before me the Encyclical Letter of Leo XIII., dated 18th November, 1893, *De Studiis Scripturæ Sacræ*, which I shall quote as "the Encyclical."

The Church takes certain books for Scripture, "not because they were got up by human industry, and afterwards approved by Church authority; nor simply because they contain a revelation without error; but because they were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and have God for their author" (Vatican Council, sess. 3, c. 2, quoted in the Encyclical). Inspiration thus means Divine authorship. The writer of a book of Scripture, as such, was a sort of secretary employed by God. This does not mean that the writer was discharged from all labour of collecting information, conceiving ideas, and finding words. It is not God's way to let His servants off taking trouble. St. Luke tells us of the pains he took in inquiring of those who had been witnesses of our Lord's life (St. Luke i. 1—4). That the Holy Ghost left the writer to use his own style, elegant or harsh, cultivated or un-

cultivated, appears from such differences of style as we observe between Isaias and Amos, or the difference between the Greek of the Apocalypse and the elegant idiom of St. Luke and St. James. It was the theory of Verbal Inspiration, that the Holy Ghost supplied every word and every particle of Holy Scripture, and left nothing to the human will and human taste of the writer. This was the theory of sundry early Anglican divines, but it is not taught by the Catholic Church. Imagine a lawyer making his clerk get up a case, then bidding him write a letter upon it, himself standing by, looking over the clerk's shoulder while he writes; letting the man beat his brains to find ideas, logical order, and phrases; checking him when he would write this, approving and allowing that; helping him out, when he is at a loss; suggesting phrases, dictating important passages; finally revising the whole, and signing the letter at the end with his own name, and making it his own—and you have something of a human parallel to the action of God in inspiring Scripture, so far as we can conceive it.

Inspiration differs from infallibility as the whole from the part. Inspiration is infallibility and something more. The canons of a General Council, the definitions of the Pope, speaking *ex cathedra*, are infallible, but not inspired. They are divinely preserved from error, but they have not God for their author. They do not take rank with Holy Scripture. A friend writes a letter for the press. I read it over, and correct certain inaccuracies and exaggerations, corrections which he accepts. I

approve of the letter in its amended form, and he sends it. When it appears, I am ready to stand by it. Still the letter is his, and not mine. And so the Bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, defining the Immaculate Conception, has Pius IX., not the Holy Ghost, for its author. But the conclusion which it arrives at and proclaims is guaranteed by the Holy Ghost.

The Encyclical adopts what it calls "the firm conviction of all the Fathers and Doctors," "that Holy Writ, as it came from the pen of the Sacred Writers, is absolutely free from all error." The Encyclical quotes and makes its own the words of St. Augustine, writing to St. Jerome: "I confess to your charity that it is only to those books of Scripture which are now called canonical, that I have learned to pay such awe and honour as firmly to believe that none of their authors has fallen into any error in writing. And if I do come across anything in those documents that seems contrary to truth, I shall not question but that either the manuscript is in error, or the translator has mistaken the sense of the original, or I have not understood."

To see what the Encyclical is aiming at, we must notice two sorts of statements in Holy Scripture; statements of faith and morals, and statements of mere history. Instances of the former sort are the promise of the Holy Eucharist, St. John vi. 49—59; the institution of the Holy Eucharist, 1 Cor. xi. 23—29; the precept of forgiving enemies, St. Matt. v. 43—47; and the precepts on the sanctity of marriage, St. Matt. xix.

3—9. Texts like these affect our creed and our daily practice; without them, our life might be very different from what it is. No man, believing in the inspiration of Scripture, ever raised a doubt of the accuracy with which these passages were written by the inspired authors. A good instance of a merely historical passage is the account of the shipwreck of St. Paul in Acts xxvii. It does not appear that our lives would have been materially altered either in belief, practice, or prospect, if St. Paul had never been shipwrecked, or if the details of the event had never come down to us. In such historical details some Catholics of weight had shown themselves not unwilling to admit the possibility of some incidental error on the part of the inspired writers of Scripture, even as we know that the infallibility of the Pope does not extend to the incidental and side remarks, the *obiter dicta* as they are called, which he may see fit to append over and above the main gist and purport of a dogmatic decree. This hesitation of Catholics as to the entire correspondence of every Scripture statement with fact and history, is removed by the Encyclical. In Holy Scripture, as it was originally conceived and written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, there is absolutely no error on any subject whatever.

This thesis needs explaining, and that on many points. We can only touch on some of the chief explanations necessary. Where matters of science are touched, the language of Scripture is popular and conversational, not scientific. Scripture is not

a teacher of science. Outside the lecture-room, a man would be a pedant, who persisted in clothing all his utterances with the precise garb of scientific accuracy. The Encyclical says: "We must consider that the sacred writers, or rather the Spirit of God who spoke in them, had no mind to teach men truths that were of no avail for salvation, about the innermost constitution of visible things; wherefore, instead of entering directly into the investigation of nature, they at times describe things and treat of them either in metaphorical language, or in the common language of the period, even as the best scientific men of this day speak on many topics in daily life. And as in ordinary conversation sensible appearances are first and properly put forth, in like manner the sacred writer adopts what appears to sense, or what God Himself, addressing men, has signified in human fashion to suit their understanding."

Another thing to remember is that the Bible is in the main an Oriental book. Now an Oriental does not tell a story like a matter-of-fact Englishman, nor with the punctilious observance of clear and precise expression, that we expect of one writing for an examination in history. Comparing one text of the Bible with another, we find out that no such punctiliousness is to be looked for there. Thus in St. Matt. i. 8, we read: *Joram begot Ozias.* But from 4 Kings xi.—xiv., it appears that three generations of kings, Ochozias, Joas, and Amasias, intervened between Joram and Ozias. Joram *begot, i.e.*, was the great great-grandfather of Ozias.

St. Paul (Galat. iii. 17) speaks of the law being given to Moses four hundred and thirty years after the promises made to Abraham. But from Acts vii. 6, it appears that the Israelites were in Egypt four hundred years, to which period must be added the patriarchal lives of Isaac and Jacob, extending long over thirty years. The smaller number is included in the greater. All that St. Paul's argument required was a very long time, and four hundred and thirty years is a long time; he did not care to count the rest.

A familiar illustration. Some one finds out that a particular train in Paddington Station goes to Reading and Birmingham, places in which he is interested. Some one else mentions Oxford, which comes to him quite as an afterthought. Thereupon he writes it down: "This train goes to Reading, Birmingham, and Oxford." The statement is perfectly true, but may easily suggest a wrong inference. Accordingly, ages afterwards, when all three towns are destroyed, some one deciphers the note, and argues from it that Oxford lay north of Birmingham.

Another example of "Oriental" narrative may be found in the way an Irish peasant tells a story. He may be a most truthful person, and speak the truth perfectly in his own way, only you must know his way is not the way of Thucydides, nor of a Parliamentary Blue-book. If you persist in putting a Thucydidean or Parliamentary official interpretation upon his words, you will make him say what he never meant to say, and what none of his

countrymen would ever understand him to say; and so you may arrive at an inaccuracy, or untruth, but the untruth is not his; it is yours, who have not been at the pains to understand his language and style.

St. Matthew's Gospel is a notable instance of the neglect of chronological order in Scripture narrative. This is admitted as a first principle by all who elaborate Harmonies of the Gospels. The chronology is best supplied by St. Luke. If we had St. Matthew only, we might be led to infer quite a wrong sequence of the events of our Lord's life.

St. John wrote long after the other three Evangelists, supplying matter which they had passed over; and where he narrates what they also tell us, he puts in remarks apparently on purpose to save us from drawing wrong conclusions from their narrative. It was desirable that we should know the Life and Passion of our Saviour more accurately than other Scripture histories. In other histories we have not the benefit of a St. John coming after to make sure of our not misconstruing what is said.

All this shows that, though Scripture is historically correct, it is easy for our blundering and imperfectly informed selves to read false history into Scripture.

Besides the reliability of Holy Scripture as originally written, there is further question of the reliability of the texts and versions which have come down to us. I quote from Father Hunter, *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, n. 158:

"There is only one version of the Scriptures which has received the formal approval of the Church, this is that one of the Latin versions which obtained general currency in the West, and goes by the name of the Vulgate, or ordinary version. As to this, the Council of Trent declared not only that the Books contained in this version, with all their parts, were inspired; but also that among all the current Latin versions this one was to be held as *authentic*, and as such was used by the Council in proving the dogmas of the Church, and reforming morals. This declaration of the Council is often misunderstood. It does not imply the entire conformity of the Vulgate to the originals; and it is perfectly allowable to suppose that the translator was misled by false readings in the manuscript that he used, or that he mistook the sense of what was before him. The work of critically settling the text, and of interpretation, is not interfered with by the Decree; as a matter of fact, the critical value of the Vulgate stands high, but it is not conclusive. But the meaning of the declaration is this: that in an argument upon a question of faith and morals, there is no appeal from the authority of the Vulgate; whatever propositions, in these spheres, follow from the Vulgate, are undoubtedly true. It may be that the corresponding passages of the originals did not yield the same sense, . . . but it will never be shown that the teaching of the Vulgate on faith and morals is in conflict with what we know on the subject from the originals, or from other sources of knowledge of Divine truth."

An example. In Isaias xvi. 1, the Vulgate has *Emitte agnum, Domine, dominatorem terræ*—"Send forth the Lamb, O Lord, the ruler of the earth." From this may be argued the royalty, or even the divinity, of the Messias. Turning to the Hebrew, we find quite another sense. In arguing with a non-Catholic the text is not controversially of great use. But a Catholic is assured that the conclusion of faith which he draws from it, that Christ is King and God, is correct, although perhaps it was not the meaning of Isaias to assert it in that place.

CONFERENCE VIII.

FAITH DISTINCT FROM REASON.

Third Sunday after Easter, 9 May, 1897.

We make an act of Divine faith in any article of our creed, when we take God's word for it. Faith is belief on the authority of God revealing. The motive of faith is the truthfulness of God who speaks. Faith is an act of submission of the intellect to God; it is a venture upon God's word; and at the same time it is a laying hold of some truth which He has revealed, inasmuch as He reveals it and vouches for it.

To a Catholic, the whole credit of God is pledged for every article of Catholic faith. If one single article were false, our faith in God would be gone; the whole edifice of religion would crumble. It all stands or falls together. One must be a Catholic all over, or nothing. There is an inconsistency of thought in going out from Catholicism into any form of heresy, such as that of the Old Catholics. If you cannot trust God and take His word for everything, how believe Him at all? Hence, reasonably enough, Catholics in our time commonly do not fall into heresy, but if they cease to be Catholics, they become Agnostics, and profess uncertainty of all religious truth.

It may be said: "I am willing enough to believe in anything that God may reveal, but how do I know that He has revealed anything?" A very pertinent question, and one that takes a deal of answering. It is not the object of this Conference to answer it; at the same time we cannot altogether pass it by. We will therefore deal with it briefly.

The evidence that God has given a revelation comes to different persons in different ways. They who witnessed the visible ministry of Christ and His Apostles, had before their eyes the evidence of miracles, attesting the divine message. *The works themselves that I do*, says our Saviour, *give testimony of me that the Father hath sent me* (St. John v. 36). *My preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of the Spirit and of power*, that is, in the evidence of miracles wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, says St. Paul (1 Cor. ii. 4). To us Catholics the chief evidence that God has spoken is the abiding moral miracle of the existence of the Catholic Church. That Church is a wonder to all the world, but to none is she so wonderful, so admirable, so manifest a witness of God, as to those who do not simply gaze upon her from without, but view her majesty and her beauty from within her sacred precincts.

We hold an article of faith usually in two ways: first, on faith, supernaturally, inasmuch as we are *taught of God* (1 Thess. iv. 9). Secondly, in some sort, on natural grounds of reason, inasmuch as we could defend the article in controversy with an adversary who was not satisfied to take it on faith.

These two ways form the subject of this Conference. Faith then, as such, is not an assent to a reasoned conclusion because it is a conclusion of reason. We do not hold a thing on faith because in some manner we can prove it, but solely in reliance on the word of God revealing it. The trust and venture of faith is not on syllogisms, but on God.

There are some articles of faith that we can evince by philosophical reasoning with more or less of success; for instance, the great moral truths, and the rudimentary principles of religion, as that God will punish the wicked and reward the good in a life to come. But generally the truths of faith and revelation are not susceptible of this sort of intrinsic proof. All we can do is to show from history and tradition that they are parts of Christianity: then we can argue the general merits of the Christian system, and its claims on human belief. This or that doctrine, we say, you must take as part of a system, which on the whole, you are unreasonable if you reject. So Cardinal Franzelin has accumulated an overwhelming mass of evidence of the Christian tradition on the Real Presence. We may point out to an opponent that

As I am a Christian, faithful man,

I bow to that tradition, and so should he, if he is a Christian.

It will happen however to most of us, if we take the injudicious course of breaking lances with all opponents on the field of controversy, that we shall frequently encounter adversaries more learned and

better skilled in argument than ourselves, and shall be fairly beaten out of the field. This has happened to Catholic controversialists again and again, so far at least as concerned the particular merits of the case in dispute. Yet we do not read of the beaten Catholic changing his faith on that account. It would have been absurd, it would have been wicked of him to have abandoned his faith merely because he was beaten in an argument in defence of it, or because, without his arguing at all, he was assailed, whether by spoken word or on printed paper, with difficulties against faith for which he knew no answer.

Suppose I am bound to go from Oxford to London, and I find the Great Western line flooded. Then I will go round the other way, by the London and North-Western. I am not doing my duty unless I travel by the line that is still open. In like manner we reach a truth of faith by two ways, one of faith, and one of reason. When the way of reason is blocked to us by some argument that we cannot answer, the way of faith still remains open, and we are bound to go by it, and to hold the truth all the same.

An example. The Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition in the January of this year, 1897, issued a decree about the much disputed text of the Three Witnesses, or the *comma Joanneum*, 1 St. John v. 7, that it cannot safely be denied, or even called in question, that this text is authentic.[1] Incidentally be it remarked, this is not an *ex cathedra* decision;

[1] See *Tablet*, May 8, 1897.

it is no exercise of Papal Infallibility calling for the absolute inward assent of all Catholics. Now what if some future Pope some day (not at all a likely supposition) were to take up this text, 1 St. John v. 7, with all the force of his authority, and commend it at once to the outward reverence and interior acceptance of all the faithful as a genuine portion of Holy Scripture? We should all make our act of faith accordingly, and know by faith that it was Scripture. But when we came to weigh the critical evidence for and against it, as we might weigh the like evidence for and against that disputed chapter of Thucydides, iii. 84, it might easily happen that the evidence, as we saw it, went all the other way, against the genuineness of the text. What should we then do? Observe that the evidence either way is not, and cannot be, absolutely cogent and overwhelming. You can never set that critical question in the same full light in which you have the evidence for the existence of Alexander the Great. If you can, all we can say is, that our supposition is absurd, and that the Holy Spirit will hinder any Pope from making any such definition; for since truth cannot contradict truth, it follows that as we are naturally certain of any particular truth, and supernaturally certain that the word of the Church is true, we have a resultant certainty, natural and supernatural combined, that the word of the Church will never be found in conflict with that particular truth.[1]

[1] He (the Catholic) is sure, and nothing shall make him doubt, that if anything seems to be proved by astronomer, or geologist, or

Observe further that these two mental attitudes are very different one from another: (1) "I am judge and master of the whole question, and I decide that this verse is not genuine." (2) "I find the question doubtful and obscure, but with such light as I have I cannot answer the arguments against the genuineness of the verse." The second is the attitude of mind that we have in view. It is an attitude into which we are often thrown when, wisely or unwisely, of choice or of necessity, we have listened to or read something that tells against our faith.

What then should we do in the supposed case about the text of the Three Witnesses? Simply avow that the genuineness of it is beyond us as a matter of biblical science and criticism, and yet hold it firmly for genuine on faith. The way of natural reason is blocked for us, but we reach the point proposed by the way of faith.

And as in this imaginary case, so in many actual cases. We hold by faith to the Vatican definition of the infallibility of the Pope; and yet perhaps we should not know what to reply to an Anglican Professor of Church History, who made out Pope Liberius an Arian, and Pope Honorius a Monothelite. We take the Second Epistle of St. Peter, as the Church tenders it to us, for part of the New

chronologist, or antiquarian, or ethnologist, in contradiction to the dogmas of faith, that point will eventually turn out, first, not to be *proved*, or secondly, not *contradictory*, or thirdly, not contradictory to anything *really revealed*, but to something which has been confused with revelation (Newman, Lectures on University Subjects, viii. 4).

Testament: we are not learned enough to vindicate by argument its disputed place on the Canon. We should quite break down in an attempt to prove Matrimony to be a sacrament. Still we bow with the assent of faith to the Council of Trent telling us that it is so.

Our faith must be of this sturdy, independent nature, if we are not to be *blown about by every wind of doctrine* (Ephes. iv. 14). Otherwise we are Catholics in the morning, and in the evening we are Agnostics. The first disputant we meet, more erudite or more subtle than ourselves, will carry off our faith at the point of his lance. Faith is called by the Council of Trent "the root of justification." All deeds of holiness that make us acceptable to God, and deserving of a reward in Heaven, spring from some motive of faith. Such deeds are difficult to human flesh and blood, even when faith is firm; they would become impossible if faith were vacillating, wavering, and subvertible by argument.

These years that you spend at the University are years of learned leisure, compared with your other years, and the lives of the generality of men. Yet certainly no one of you has the time, to say nothing of the ability or the inclination, to sound the depths of religious controversy, and build up a theory of this world in its relations to the next, all by the working of your own reason on the data of your own knowledge. If you cannot be Christians on faith, you cannot afford to be Christians at all. Mere reason will never Christianise you, nor keep you Catholics.

This is the the tradition of the Fathers of the Church; as of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who writes in his poem on Virtue:

> Little way go arguments towards the knowledge of God:
> For every argument has another argument standing over against it:
> But my Word has not a faith that can be turned about.
> It is a great thing to cling to the Word once spoken.

And of St. John Chrysostom, on Romans iv. 20: "Faith is clearer than proof from argument, and more convincing, for it is impossible for any second argument to come atop of it and make it totter. He that is convinced by argument may be unconvinced again: but he that rests on faith has stopped his ears against all argument that could mar his faith."

We will end with the saying of one who deserves to be listened to in close proximity to the Fathers of the Church. It was a saying of Cardinal Newman: "Ten thousand difficulties don't make one doubt." And the explanation is plain. The difficulties are in the way of reason, but the doubt would be in the way of faith. And the two ways are not the same.

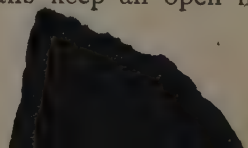
CONFERENCE IX.

THE VALUE OF REASON ALONG WITH FAITH.

Fourth Sunday after Easter, 16 May, 1897.

MR. LECKY (*History of European Morals*, pp. 200, 201) describes what he calls "intellectual virtue" as "to proportion on all occasions conviction to evidence, and to be ready, if need be, to exchange the calm of assurance for all the suffering of a perplexed and disturbed mind." It appears from the context that "the calm of assurance" which he is thinking of is the certainty of divine faith: "evidence" means argumentation against faith; and the "perplexed and disturbed mind" is the endowment of the man who has now begun to doubt of what he once firmly believed on God's word with the assent of faith. And this descent from the calm assurance of the Christian to the perplexity and disturbance of unbelief, Mr. Lecky takes to be a feat of "intellectual virtue," using that term in a sense unknown to Aristotle.

Our best reply to Mr. Lecky is to return his invitation, and press upon him the exercise of the virtue which he describes. There is a certain calm assurance of those who have made up their minds against the claims of the Catholic Church. Such persons by no means keep an open mind to hear



what the Pope and his bishops and priests have to say for themselves. Their first position in religion is this: "Whatever else we are, we will not be Catholics." When such a person abandons this calm resolve, and with sincere desire of God's truth looks to see whether haply that truth be not contained in the teaching of the Catholic Church, he is apt to fall into an agony and perplexity of mind. This agony can hardly be chronic. He will get out of it in one of three ways. One way is by becoming a Catholic, a step which may entail pecuniary difficulties and sore separation from friends, but will at least ensure intellectual rest and peace. Another way is by reverting to a steady disbelief in the Catholic Church, perhaps developing a positive hostility to Catholicism and even Christianity. A third way, perhaps the way most commonly taken, is to give up the study of religion as too tremendous a subject for human faculties, and bury oneself in business, or politics, or literature, or law, or science, or simply in amusement.

The second and third ways we leave here uncriticised, and return to the consideration of the first. The object of the present Conference is to argue the utility and value of Reason in conjunction with Faith. The first use of Reason in such conjunction is to lead an inquirer to the faith. If he has not the faith, he cannot attain to it ordinarily except by some process of inquiry and reasoning in proportion to his capacity. Conceivably he may be converted by God's truth bursting upon his soul in a moment by intuition, as it burst upon Saul by

the vision that he had on the road to Damascus. But such conversions are not to be looked for, and the promises of them are often illusory. Conversion, then, ordinarily is a work of reason, abetted by prayer, originated and borne out by God's grace.

A shore has to be gained: without a boat it can never be reached. If the shore is the revealed truth of God, the rowing process may represent the exercise of reason. Let us say that it is impossible to land the passenger as one would land an infirm old woman. It is impossible simply to lift him up and lay him on his back on the grass. He must step bravely out, when the oars have brought the boat near enough, otherwise he will never set foot on the shore. To step out in mid-stream would be folly; not to step out, when the boat is hard by the land, is renouncing the purpose of the voyage. Mere reasoning will no more put a person in possession of revealed truth than mere rowing will set him ashore. When reasoning has brought him near enough, he must close with the truth, venture upon it, step out upon it—if he will not be of the number of those who are *always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* (2 Timothy iii. 7.) He must make up his mind to believe. Assisted by God's grace, he must make his act of faith, now or perhaps never. If he never will do anything but reason and discuss, he certainly never will believe; for faith is not an act of ratiocination: it implies, as St. John Chrysostom says (on 1 Cor. i. 22), "quelling arguments and submitting yourself to the Master." Ere the argumentative process leading

to faith was complete, it would have been folly to quell arguments, like the folly of jumping out of the boat in mid-stream. Every priest knows that a convert may be received too soon, before he has been sufficiently instructed and convinced, before his reason and understanding have been sufficiently exercised upon the truths which he is finally to embrace by faith. We may say in imitation of Ecclesiastes (ch. iii.): *All things have their time: a time for inquiring, and a time to hold aloof from inquiries: a time of reason, and a time of faith.*

All this is aptly declared by one whose words, we hope, will never die away in Oxford. In Cardinal Newman's *Loss and Gain* (part ii. ch. vi.) we read:

"Now it need not be denied that those who are external to the Church must begin with private judgment [or what Mr. Lecky calls 'intellectual virtue']; they use it in order ultimately to supersede it, as a man out of doors uses a lamp in a dark night, and puts it out when he gets home. What would be thought of his bringing it into his drawing-room? What would the goodly company there assembled before a genial hearth and under glittering chandeliers, the bright ladies and the well-dressed gentlemen, say to him if he came in with a great-coat on his back, a hat on his head, an umbrella under his arm, and a large stable-lantern in his hand? Yet what would be thought, on the other hand, if he precipitated himself into the inhospitable night and the war of the elements in his

ball-dress? 'When the King came in to see the guests, he saw a man who had not on a wedding-garment.' He saw a man who had determined to live in the Church as he had lived out of it, who would not use his privileges, who would not exchange reason for faith, who would not accommodate his thoughts and doings to the glorious scene which surrounded him, who was groping for the hidden treasure and digging for the pearl of price in the high, lustrous, all-jewelled temple of the Lord of hosts; who shut his eyes and speculated, when he might open them and see. There is no absurdity, then, or inconsistency in a person first using his private judgment and then denouncing its use. Circumstances change duties."

This, then, is one office of Reason, to help in leading men to the faith who had it not before. But also for the faithful themselves, as such, Reason is of the highest value. It relieves the pressure and strain upon faith, when it is attacked by argument from without or by the mind's own questionings from within. Faith, as we have shown, is equal to the strain. The result of adverse argument is not any doubt of matter of faith, but still it is a temptation, and temptation is always painful to those who love good. It is painful as an accusation against a mother, whom one tenderly loves and has learned thoroughly to trust. The accusation is not entertained in the mind for a moment as a thing that could possibly be true, but perhaps it cannot be disproved, and then it pains us. When a good

friend rises up, and by argument scatters the charge to the winds, we owe him gratitude for a very sensible relief. So we are pleased when the orthodoxy, if not the personal character, of certain Popes is vindicated by historical argument. We knew and firmly held by faith that our Lord would never permit His Vicar to teach heresy from the Chair of truth. Not being historians, we were unable to refute the charges of heterodoxy which men, who have given their lives to history, bring against this or that Pope. We chose rather to take the word of God than the word of man upon the point. We reminded ourselves how possible it was to read even original records with prejudice, or in misconception of the subject-matter. Still the confident assurance of this eminent anti-Catholic historian loomed upon us as an ugly bogey, till one day we read with relief how an historian of equal eminence and learning had been able to write down against all his allegations, *non-proven*.

The function of reason is rather negative, to show the inconclusiveness of objections, than positively to prove a dogma or a fact of faith. Much of the matter of faith is beyond the reach of direct proof. But when a disputant fresh from the schools swoops down upon us with an argument, as he says, for the impossibility of transubstantiation, and we find that he has got hold of the Lockian definition of substance, as the sum of the sensible qualities of the object, we congratulate him on the logical sequence of conclusion from premises, but send him back to learn a better definition of substance

We have not proved transubstantiation, but neither has he disproved it.

We cannot do better than take the Church's own estimate of the importance and value of reason to her cause. She never will allow that her dogmas are in contradiction with reason, or that reason is of no avail to establish conclusions in preparation for faith. *Credo quia impossibile*, was Tertullian's paradox, but the Church has never endorsed it. Tertullian was a headstrong, violent man, whose untamed impetuosity finally carried him out of the Church into the Montanist heresy. A nineteenth century Tertullian arose in Lamennais. He, too, struck at human reason, denying its competency to prove the existence of God. God, he said, was known by the tradition of the human race, not by reason. Such was Traditionalism. But Gregory XVI. would have none of it, and Lamennais fell from the Church which he was not allowed to defend and advance according to his own notions. The Church went on disavowing his repudiation of the aid that reason lends to theology. In the Vatican Council (can. 1, *De revelatione*) she made Traditionalism the subject of her heaviest censure: "If any man says that God, one and true, our Creator and Lord, cannot be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason through the things that are made, let him be anathema."

If a man of scant leisure spends his time, and a man of limited means spends his money, lavishly upon a certain pursuit, there is the clearest evidence that he sets store by that pursuit. The Catholic

Church generally is not rich, and she wants her ministers for service early in their lives. Yet, under the name of Philosophy, Theology, or Divinity studies, she insists on putting men through a severe course of close reasoning on things of faith, leading up to faith, or consequent upon faith, and that for three, four, or six years, ere she will ordain them. And experience proves her right. One of the greatest blows that the Church received in the French Revolution, as great a blow almost as she ever could receive, was the closing of her ecclesiastical Seminaries wherever the Revolution or the wars of the Revolution spread. It was the policy of Julian the Apostate reiterated: for Julian would have cut off the Christians from all culture and exercise of mind. That temporary paralysis of philosophy and theology had its effect in enfeebling the teaching ability of the Church's ministers far into the present century.

The Church has nothing to gain from prejudice, confusion of thought, ignorance, mental darkness, surface habits of mind, and lazy reluctance to investigate and face spiritual realities. No cause in the world suffers so much as her cause suffers from these human miseries. Though faith is the very breath of her nostrils, yet she cries for reason also, the cry of St. Augustine, *Ama valde intellectum*—"Love understanding exceedingly."

CONFERENCE X.

THE SUPERNATURALNESS OF FAITH.

Fifth Sunday after Easter, 23 May, 1897.

PROTESTANTISM has culminated in an ignoring of the supernatural order and a falling back upon natural virtue. The very meaning of the word *supernatural* is lost in England. One educated man will tell you that the supernatural is the field of research of the Psychical Society, ghosts, apparitions, haunted houses, or the phenomena of Spiritualism. He has taken the *præternatural* for the supernatural. Another may instance miracles, such as are reported from Lourdes. Now miracles may enter into the supernatural order, but the supernatural is not necessarily anything miraculous. Since the day of your baptism, there have been manifold supernatural workings in the soul of every one of you, yet, I take it, not one of you has ever been the subject of a miracle.

No, by the supernatural we do not mean ghosts, and we do not mean miracles. Faith is no miracle, and yet it is the first virtue in the supernatural order. We might conceivably have had religion, and worshipped God, and arrived at an eternal happiness, sufficient to have satisfied our souls—all that, without entering into the region of the supernatural. Such

would have been our duties, and such our reward, had God pleased to treat us simply according to what we are as men, His creatures, His servants. Reverencing Him and observing His law here, we might have looked forward to an eternity for our immortal souls, to be spent without sorrow or temptation among the fairest works of His hands, contemplating in them His beauty, who dwelt in light inaccessible, Author of all. God has willed to treat us above the deserts of our nature, raising us from servants to friends, and even to be His children. That is to say, He has placed us in the supernatural order, the term of which is the sight of Him in Heaven, the sitting as it were at table with Him there, as St Thomas describes it, and seeing Him as friend sees the face of His friend at table, the clinging to Him and being with Him, as children are with their father at home. Incidentally and occasionally, in the sort of way that Pontius Pilate got into the Creed, anything may make towards this end, even wars, pestilences, and bad Popes. But whatever properly and of itself makes for the end just stated, is truly a supernatural agency: such are the Incarnation and Passion of our Lord, the Church, the Bible, the Papacy, the seven Sacraments, grace, and, to come to our point, the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Faith is the first virtue that of itself makes for the vision of God. It is the root of all supernatural holiness. No man can ever attain to see God, who has not had in some manner, while on earth, the supernatural endowment of faith.

Like other supernatural virtues, faith cannot be exercised without actual grace. This statement needs to be clearly understood. We must have a clear idea of what we mean by actual grace. We will imagine ourselves taking, not a very romantic journey, but enough for our purposes of illustration, from Oxford to London. We carefully observe the face of the earth, first as the forces known to geological science have made it. We think of the cooling of the earth's crust, and its shrinking into huge wrinkles, valley and hill. We see the ice age, and the glacier filling and slowly scooping out what is to be the valley of the Thames. Then we see the floods over all, tides and currents hurrying the gravel hither and thither, and depositing it in beds. Our meditations may wander on to tropical forests and their denizens, till we are arrested by the thought that nothing of all this explains the state of things under our eyes, except in its outer framework and containing walls. The whole face of nature has been transformed by man and man's doings, nowhere more thoroughly than between the towers of Christ Church and those of Westminster. Now are human agencies and the forces of glacier and flood the same; more complex here, more simple there, but not differing in kind? Is it one and the same physical force, that has scooped out the valley of the Thames, and created the University of Oxford? There are men who, if they mean what their books imply, should answer *yes;* but not many will venture upon such a downright answer. We might call the doctrine monstrous. We will content

ourselves with saying that it is wholly unproved. It is also wholly in conflict with Catholic teaching, a first principle of which is that man, as an intellectual and moral being, lives in another order than that where mere physical laws prevail.

We have there, modifying the aspect of the earth, first, certain physical forces, of old predominant, and still powerful; secondly, the mind of man adjusting nature to purposes of his own—in fact, *humanising* nature. So within the mind of man himself, there are two sorts of changes discernible; the one due to sensory impressions, to associations of ideas, to conversation with other men, and to the man's own personal will at work upon himself, intensifying certain ideas and desires and effacing others—all these changes in the mind may be called *natural*; the other sort of changes due to God conversing with man, and man answering to the impulse received from God—these changes in the mind are *supernatural*, they are the operations of actual grace. God cultivates and *divinises* man, even as man cultivates and humanises the earth. Actual grace, then, is the direct intercourse of God with the soul. It is not any infusion of knowledge. God does not Himself discharge the functions of catechist or religious instructor. He leaves man to be taught his religion by his fellow-man. But, of the ideas thus provided, God causes some to strike the intellect strongly and vividly. Of the motives to conduct thus suggested, God urges some with especial force upon the will. This is actual grace, addressed to man's two highest faculties, intellect

and will. Every act of faith is prompted by this two-fold movement of actual grace; otherwise it cannot come about at all.

When an adult pagan in process of conversion to Christianity has done his reasoning and inquiring, there comes upon him what St. Thomas calls "an internal impulse of God inviting" (2a 2æ, q. 2. art. 9. ad. 3). This adds clearness to the conclusion, which his reason has already drawn in favour of the Christian position. To the will it is a repetition of the Scriptural invitation: *It is I, fear not: only believe* (St. Matt. xiv 27; St. Luke xxiv. 36—39; St. Mark v. 36). When the man does believe and makes his first act of faith a special aid of grace carries his will and intellect through that act. It is an act done with difficulty, and is often remembered ever afterwards as the outcome of a great struggle. And no wonder, for it is an act elicited without any previous corresponding habit in the soul. It is like a succession of good strokes in a game, taken without any previously acquired skill. The thing cannot be done, unless the player's hand be guided by another, and even then it is done with difficulty. The first act of faith in an adult, having no previous habit of faith in his soul, involves quite an extraordinary concurrence of God.

The habit, or virtue, of faith is infused into the soul at baptism. It is no inpouring of knowledge, where ignorance was before; no awakening of a dormant intelligence, as is that of infants; but it is a facility of believing any doctrine of faith already taught, and a predisposition to believe the doctrines

of faith when they shall afterwards be communicated to the mind. This predisposition may be afterwards counteracted by ill instruction or evil courses. Still one is often filled with admiration at seeing how readily the truths of faith are taken up, when they are propounded to baptized children. Even in baptized Catholics every act of faith requires actual grace, but the operation is usually very facile and easy, the supernatural habit pre-existing, unthwarted by heresy.

Persons sometimes ask us: "How can you believe such a doctrine as transubstantiation or Papal infallibility? I could not take it up if I tried." And we answer: "Oh, it is because you have not faith; if you had faith, it would be all easy to you." The answer is correct, and according to our Lord's words (St. Mark ix. 23). It is question of the exercise of a supernatural faculty, which some men have not. Why they have it not, is not ours to judge. But it is equally by an exercise of supernatural power that the priest consecrates at the altar, and he, or any other Christian, believes in the Sacred Presence that is produced by such consecration. The one power is given by Holy Order to God's minister, the other by Baptism to God's child. The two powers differ in many respects, but the one is not more supernatural than the other. An act of faith is an impossibility to mere man, as man, quite as much of an impossibility as the consecration of the Eucharist. *No man can come to me* (by faith, as the context shows), *unless the Father who hath sent me draw him* (St. John vi. 44).

Besides the supernaturalness of faith there is what divines call "the obscurity of faith;" and the latter attribute affords some confirmation of the former. We must not expect faith to do for us more than it is warranted to do. Only a limited number of truths are revealed; of these only can we have the certainty of faith, and of no more. Our curiosity would like revelation to lift the veil a little further, say on the mystery of predestination. That curiosity cannot be gratified, and we have to fall back on reason, a very uncertain guide on such ground. We want further revelation, and it is not given. But our mind craves for more than revelation. Still but on the frontiers of the kingdom, we long to *see the king in his beauty;* still in mid-ocean, we would fain *see the land afar off* (Isaias xxxiii. 17). The land is out of sight, and can only be believed in for the present. Then at least we should like to feel as though we saw it, by a sort of *mirage;* and that is occasionally granted us. There are occasions in life when faith seems to have passed already into vision. The realities of religion stand out before our view, like the nooks and crannies of the hills on a fine summer evening. For those times we might almost read *faith was not* for *thought was not,* in the celebrated lines of Wordsworth:

> In such access of mind, in such high hour
> Of visitation from the living God,
> Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired.
> No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;
> Rapt into still communion that transcends
> The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,

His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him; it was all blessedness and love.

We have at those times faith, and something more —that feeling of faith which ascetic writers call "consolation." Only in rare moments can we expect much of that, once "the warm rains of childhood are over," to repeat a phrase Bishop Hedley used here the other Sunday. The faith of Christian man in his prime, journeying along the dusty roads of life, is often hard, dry, unfeeling; and its objects are shrouded in obscurity. But the faith is still there, robust against many attacks, too wonderful to be a mere growth of nature. It is the impalpable contact of the Father's hand, drawing His elect to *the land of vision* (Genesis xxii. 2).

CONFERENCE XI.

PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension, 30 May, 1897.

Preach the Gospel, . . . he that believeth not shall be condemned (St. Mark xvi. 15, 16). We need not dwell on the doubts that critics have thrown on this concluding passage of St. Mark's Gospel. To us Catholics it is "authentic," in the sense in which the Council of Trent declares the Vulgate to be so. Moreover, the denunciation which it contains is abundantly borne out by the rest of the New Testament, as we shall see.

The denunciation is against those who believe not the Gospel when it is preached, in so far as it is preached to them and reaches their understanding, and is not barred by prejudices and misconceptions for which they are not responsible. This matter we touched upon in our earlier Conferences, pointing out the difference between one who is simply not a Catholic and one who is a contumacious heretic. The more theology we know, and the more experience we gain by living, the more we shall appreciate the wisdom of our Lord's precept, *Judge not* (St. Matt. vii. 1) of individuals.

There are not relatively so many of our countrymen as there used to be who quite like to be called

Protestants. Of those who still cling to the name, many are not consistently and thoroughly Protestant The essence of Protestantism is "private judgment" in matters of religion. We will endeavour to discern what exactly that comes to. It comes, we shall find, to a denial of any revelation given by God to man, which it is a sin for man to doubt or disbelieve. Sins against faith vanish from the record of evils. This is a position singularly unscriptural.

Off the field of religion, private judgment is an excellent instrument. It is the instrument of all progress in the physical sciences. A chemist goes into his laboratory: he has read of an interesting series of organic compounds which Dr. X. has investigated: he repeats some of Dr. X.'s experiments, and agrees or disagrees with his conclusions. For what he has not time to investigate, he accepts Dr. X.'s authority, and acts upon it, and teaches others according to it; or he declares Dr. X. no competent witness, and disbelieves his observations. In all these repeated judgments upon the facts of chemistry, the idea of any moral obligation to believe one way or another never once enters his mind. Tell him it is a sin not to believe in Dr. X.'s series, and he will laugh outright at the grotesque notion of there being any bounden duty to believe this or disbelieve that in the region of chemical science. And the notion *is* grotesque and absurd.

Now, is religion on the same footing with chemistry? Is it grotesque and absurd to speak

of any bounden duty to believe or disbelieve any given religious doctrine? This question is a sort of first point of Aries in the region of religious controversy. The importance of it is too often lost sight of by controversialists, who lose one another, and sometimes themselves, in discussion, from not having at the outset come to a mutual understanding on this primary point. Private judgment reigns supreme in physical science: is it to reign in religion?

Private judgment is the denial of any teaching authority that can bind the conscience to believe what is taught. But it is one thing to deny authority, another thing to deny consequences. Though there be no authority to teach, still the consequences of error may be very grave, and even fatal. There are two possible forms, therefore, of private judgment in religious matters. The one may be expressed thus: "Believe as you like; there is no authority to constrain or guide you; and whatever you choose to believe or disbelieve, it will make no difference to your final happiness or misery." The other runs: "There is indeed no authority to guide and command you: you must make out your religion for yourself: at the same time, you solve the religious problem at your peril: a wrong solution may mean everlasting misery." The first of these two forms we may call in heraldic phrase, *private judgment rampant;* the second, *private judgment couchant.*

The first simply declares religion to be out of the sphere of practical life—to be an amusement

and pastime, a pageant, like a Jubilee Procession, that you may see or not see as you will, without any difference to your vital interests—or a study, like Attic Greek, or high mathematics, or metaphysics, three subjects that no one can be blamed for being ignorant of, or loses any tangible good by neglecting them. Therefore, whether we have a Creator and Lord, or owe our existence to a fortuitous environment; whether there is a Heaven and a Hell, or either, or neither; whether the spirits of the men who peopled this globe a hundred years ago are anything now or nothing; whether the quality of our future existence, if such is to be, does or does not depend on our service of God in this present life—all these contingencies are of no practical interest to humanity, are mere food for the philosophic dreamer and the idle recluse. It is difficult to conceive how any thinking man can take such a view of religion. The view is repudiated by the earnest-minded Protestant as strongly as by the Catholic. And yet, without being exactly formulated, it is silently assumed and acted upon by multitudes who call themselves Protestants, and other multitudes who have never professed any other religion but Catholicism. However, as a theory, this form of private judgment is wholly untenable, and we need waste no more words on it.

What we have called "private judgment couchant," is the true basis of religious Protestantism. Religious Protestants invoke indeed the authority of the Bible; but the Bible to them is only a

starting-point for private judgment. the beginning of its multifarious and tortuous mazes. And the very Bible itself is now on trial before the tribunal of private judgment. These Protestants invoke yet another principle, which Bishop Hoadley made celebrated as the theme of the Bangorian Controversy, that all that God looks for is sincerity, and that He will never condemn the sincere believer, or disbeliever either, however mistaken. True, if the sincerity be of that quality of gold thrice-assayed which alone will make weight in the balance of Eternal Justice. True, if the sincerity be accompanied by inquiry, impartial, patient, and deep, in proportion to the importance of the subject. But not true, if the alleged sincerity be mere self-conceit and obstinacy, or the hasty conclusion of a frivolous mind, that has never really braced itself to the task of *seeking God, if haply it might feel after him and find him* (Acts xvii. 27).

There are two objections to this way of "private judgment couchant:" that it is a way of herculean labour, if followed seriously; and that it is not the way taught by Christ and His Apostles. About the labour of it, consider what it would involve for you. Doubtless you could show good cause why no new task of great mental effort should be obtruded upon your morning or evening hours. There remain the afternoons. After lunch then you must forego field and river; you must sit somewhere, reading, writing, and thinking; or pace soberly and sadly up and down your College walks, in meditation on the rival arguments for Theism,

Atheism, and Pantheism; for Creation and Evolution; for Utilitarianism, Hedonism, and the Categoric Imperative. You may have a Bible, if you like, to help you; but first you must learn Assyriology, Egyptiology, and Hebrew, for the Old Testament: Greek and German for the New: you must settle the Canon of Scripture, and decide on the meaning of the term Inspiration. If in despair you resolve to rest the whole issue on the word of Professor Placet, who has "got up" all these subjects, you must have reasoned grounds, well thought out, for preferring him to Professor Nonplacet, who you know disagrees with him entirely. You work hard, or pose as working hard, to acquit yourself creditably in the Schools; how hard should you work on an inquiry that, for all you have yet ascertained, may be fraught with eternal happiness or misery?

It must be owned that this portentous labour of private judgment, sounding the immensities and eternities in search for a religion, is not at all what the Prophets of old held out to be the occupation of them that *seek the Lord and his face*, that their *soul may live* (1 Chron. xvi. 11; Psalm lxviii. 33). Rather they promise that such searchers shall have an easy time of it, so far as the labour of inquiry goes. Thus Isaias (xxx. 20, 21): *Thy eyes shall see thy teacher; and thy ears shall hear the word of one admonishing thee behind thy back: This is the way, walk ye in it, and go not aside neither to the right hand nor to the left.* And the whole of ch. xxxv. foretells a very much more comfortable state of

things, *e.g.* v. 8: *And a path and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way, . . . and this shall be unto you a straight way, so that fools shall not err therein.* So too Jeremias xxxi., quoted in Hebrews viii.: *And they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest of them.* This does not look like any laborious exercise of private judgment.

Nor did our Lord and His Apostles enjoin any such exercise. They enjoined another way, much simpler and more expeditious and open to all men of good-will. It is the way of docility and faith and hearkening to the living authority, first, of God Himself made Man, and secondly to the authority of other men whom He has sent and commissioned to teach in His name. From the opening of His Ministry He invited no intellectual inquiry into the doctrines that He taught; He did not lay them down for criticism: it was to be enough for His hearers that He taught them, a messenger from God, who proved His mission by miracles (St. John v. 36; x. 25; St. Mark i. 22; St. Luke iv. 32, 36). It was not at the discretion of His hearers to believe Him or not, as they pleased. He was angry at those who rejected His overtures (St. Luke xiv. 21), and threatened them with *the outer darkness and gnashing of teeth* (St. Luke xiv. 24: cf. St. Matt. viii. 12; xxii. 13; xxv. 30). For the protest, *We will not have this man to reign over us*, in that spiritual kingdom, the first law of which is faith in the word of Christ, the parable tells of final vengeance: *As*

for those my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither and kill them before me (St. Luke xix. 14, 27).

This would be rigorous treatment, of one man by another man. But it is question of God and man, God as ruler and man as subject, God as teacher and man as taught: now between God and man there is an infinite gulf of being. The imperative reason for submission of intellect is because *os Domini locutum est—the mouth of the Lord hath spoken* (Isaias lviii. 14).

Another reason, the main argument of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans, is this. We have all sinned: we began in original sin, we have committed many actual sins. There is no forgiveness for our sins except through Jesus Christ; and His conditions for forgiveness are that we believe and be baptized, and mean to hold to our faith after Baptism. There is no righteousness to be had before God by the mere observance of the Jewish law, given though that law was by God Himself, if men will try to observe it without faith in Christ: still less can man be just before God by carrying out any other law or convention of society. *For all have sinned and do need the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Romans iii. 23, 24). They remain with their sin unforgiven (cf. St. John ix. 41), who *not knowing the justice of God, and seeking to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the justice of God*, which is *not of the law, but of faith in Christ* (Romans x. 3; Philipp. iii. 9).

Our Lord sent His Apostles, not to lecture, as philosophers or social reformers, but to *preach* κηρύσσειν, *i.e.* to *make proclamation* of a doctrine which men were to accept upon His word. They were His envoys, as He was His Father's envoy. To reject Him was to reject His Father; and again, to reject His Apostles was to reject Him. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. Into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, going forth into the streets thereof say: Even the very dust of your city that cleaveth to us, we wipe off against you. . . . I say to you, it shall be more tolerable at that day* (of judgment) *for Sodom than for that city* (St. Luke x. 10—16).

And the Apostles were confident that this their tenure of binding authority remained good after our Lord's Ascension. *Vengeance to them who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall suffer eternal punishment* (2 Thess. i. 8, 9; cf. Galat. i. 8; 2 St. John 10, 11).

It is a violation of logical method, in a complicated case, to endeavour to establish the whole case at once. You must prove one point after another; for instance, that deceased met his death by violence, before you endeavour to fix the guilt of it upon the prisoner. No attempt is here made to determine the amplitude of the doctrines that Christ and His Apostles taught as of faith, to be accepted of obligation under sin. No attempt are we making just now, to prove that this body of obligatory Christian doctrine was co-extensive, say,

with the Creed of Pius IV. All that we show is that Christ and His Apostles did teach some definite doctrine, no matter what, commanded men to accept it on faith, and forbade all disbelief as sinful. Which means, that the Church was not founded in private judgment, and that the Apostolic Age was not Protestant. So far as the Reformation went on lines of private judgment, it was very unlike the work of Christ and His Apostles.

We Catholics hear spoken to the Church of to-day in her missionary capacity not less than to the Apostolic Church the words: *As the Father hath sent me, I also send you* (St. John xx. 21). As envoy of Christ, the Church may use the words which He used as envoy of His Father:

He that believeth in me, doth not believe in me, but in him that sent me; and he that seeth me, seeth (in authority) *him that sent me. . . . And if any man hear my words and keep them not, I do not judge him; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world: he that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him—the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day* (St. John xii. 44—48). Private judgment in our day means no Teaching Church; in our Lord's day it meant no Teaching Christ. Any day it means no Revelation, that we are bound to hearken to and accept; and no Faith.

CONFERENCE XII.

HOPE AND CHARITY.

Whit Sunday, 6 June, 1897.

Hope and Love are two of the dearest names in human language. Hope and Charity are two theological and supernatural virtues. They have God for their object. Hope is the desire of God, as an object to be possessed and seen face to face; and reliance on the grace of God, leading up to that vision. Charity is the love of God as Father and Friend. Hope and Charity are supernatural as Faith is supernatural; they belong to that order in which we are elevated from mere creatures and dependents to *the adoption of sons* (Romans viii. 15; Ephes. i. 5), so that we can properly call God *Our Father*.

You cannot have too much of a supernatural virtue; you cannot push it to excess, so that it should cease to be a virtue. The great rule of "moderation in all things," supreme elsewhere in the region of morals, here does not hold. You cannot take God's word too absolutely, nor yearn for Him too earnestly, nor love Him too ardently; and that because He is God, our final end and infinite in goodness. In particular, of the virtue of Hope, St. Thomas observes: "No one can rely too

much on the divine assistance" (2a 2æ, q. 17. art. 5. ad. 2).

But we encounter people extraordinarily virtuous, in theory, who cry down Christian hope as a piece of selfishness, withdrawing man from the hearty, disinterested service of his kind. The Socialists, on the like principle, wish to destroy private enterprise, and substitute zeal in the common cause for what they call "the greed of the capitalist." Men generally, however, are not Socialists, and willingly allow one another to be actuated by hopes of promotion, of higher salary, of commercial gain. This is not selfishness; why should it be selfish to do good in hope of Heaven? Men may overdo the motive of commercial gain, and trample on their fellows in the race for wealth; but hope of Heaven lifts men to a higher and better sphere. The more fixed a man is in the hope of Heaven, the more unselfish and disinterested he becomes. It is the yearning after earthly things that leads to strifes and wars (St. James iv. 1, 2).

A good deal of the objection that is taken to the hope of eternal happiness, arises from a confusion of happiness with enjoyment and self-gratification. The objectors need a lesson in elementary philosophy, to master the distinction between happiness and pleasure. We assume that distinction here as understood. Suffice it to say that happiness, the natural object of the human will, is perfect good, even as what a hungry man naturally craves after is food, not the pleasure of eating. Pleasure is the efflorescence of good, and of happiness. It is base

to do everything simply for pleasure, but eternal hope is not the hope simply of eternal pleasure; it is the hope of eternal good, a different thing from delight and pleasure, albeit also the most delicious of things.

A more serious difficulty may be put in this way. Hope of the next world, it is often said, takes men's heart out of this, causing them to overlook their material interests in this present life, and not their personal interests only, but the good of the race. This, it is contended, has happened on a large scale in Spain and Italy, where supernatural faith and hope have been strong. It happened in the middle ages, those days of the schoolmen, when men disputed about essence and existence, matter and form, and neglected their drains, till Lord Bacon arose and turned the light of human ingenuity upon those useful sciences which are the pillars of our modern civilisation. The same tendency has withdrawn much useful talent from the secular service of mankind, and buried it in the cloister.

We cannot run down every hare that crosses our path, nor every objection. This particular objection raises large issues, which must be left to your own thoughtfulness, as well for lack of time to deal with them here as also because they are dealt with by a master hand in Cardinal Newman's *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties* (Lecture viii.). It is enough for us to remark that, whatever truth there be in these allegations, there is this great compensating good on the other side, that the hope of Heaven has cheered thousands of sad hearts, and

lightened many a load of human misery. Wealth and prosperity seem not to need hope; but wealth and prosperity are scarcely yet the lot of the multitude; they are held on uncertain tenure, and are attained only to be surrendered in sickness, age, and death. Then what is left in the general decay, if one has *no hope of the promise*? (Ephes. ii. 12). The *bruised reed* and the *smoking flax* (St. Matt. xii. 20) are still with us on every side; without hope of a better world, the one is broken and the other quenched in despair, for all the inventions of Baconian science and the applications of Epicurean philosophy. We feel this truth in sane moods, though we are apt to disregard it in flood tides of earthly bliss.

Passing from Hope to Charity, we observe a difficulty, perhaps not uncommon in the minds of children. A child has asked itself ere now: How is it possible ever to love God? God seems to the child, as He seemed to the Greeks of old, a Being who grudges us the enjoyment of the sweet and delicious things of life. We may fear Him and refrain accordingly, but that is not love. We may go a step further, and recognise the folly and harmfulness of those excesses which God forbids, and the profitableness and even necessity of those acts of austere virtue which His law enjoins: thus we come to honour God as the Custodian of the moral law; but a custodian of law and order, as such, is not loved. God Himself is not lovable to us in such a character. We may have a strong sense of duty, and prefer our duty to every other considera-

tion; but this preference for duty is not essentially love of God. Many men have it, who have little regard for God. God is not loved, nor lovable, as Lawgiver and Judge. As Creator and Benefactor He has a claim on our love in the natural order, such love as a humble dependent bears to a good master. But such love as that is not Charity. Charity, as we said at the beginning, is the love of God as Father and Friend. So to love God is difficult, aye impossible to mere nature. It is a work of grace, of the Holy Ghost, in our souls: for *the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us* (Romans v. 5).

We know the power of the act of charity for the destruction of sin One full act of charity, and of sorrow, following therefrom, for all mortal sin, expels all such sin from the soul, and restores the lost grace of God. The divine precept of confession of mortal sin remains to be fulfilled, but the sin is gone. Nor should we consider that such a full act of charity and contrition is not a thing to be expected of us ordinary mortals. At times, when death stares us in the face, and we find ourselves in sin away from the ministrations of a priest, this act is our only means of salvation; now, while our conscious life lasts, the means of salvation are always in our power. As long as we are capable of sin, we are capable also of repentance. Besides, apart from sin, there is an obligation on all Christians, so theologians teach, of making full acts of charity sometimes in their lives. But what is obligatory on all, cannot be impossible, or even

extraordinarily difficult. Heroic virtue is not of ordinary obligation.

The high road that God Himself has made to enable us to reach to the love of Him, is by the mystery of the Incarnation. We do find it in our hearts, by His grace, to love Him who was crucified and died for us. Loving Him, we love God, for He is God. Were Jesus Christ not God, God would have raised up in Him a dangerous rival to Himself in the affections of His creatures. We love our Redeemer at least as much as our Creator. We are drawn to Jesus as much as we are drawn to our invisible Father in Heaven. There is no real rivalry, for Jesus Christ is one God with the Father. But the hold that He has been allowed to take on our hearts is no small proof that He is none other than God Himself.

Hope also is an avenue to Charity. For Hope is the desire of God. *My soul hath thirsted after the strong, living God* (Psalm xli. 3). Heaven is essentially the sight and vision of God. To long for Heaven and to look forward to it is to long for God and look forward to seeing Him. There is no Charity without Hope, and Hope leads on to Charity, so much so that, in the limit, theologians find it difficult to define where exactly Hope ends and Charity begins.

Evidently Hope presupposes Faith. One cannot firmly *hope in the Lord* unless one first *relies on his word* and believes it (Psalm cxxix. 4, 5). For Hope is not a mere dream, or aspiration, or vague yearning: it is a founded assurance and definite

desire. Hope is thus a tie between the other two theological virtues. It carries Faith, and leads to Charity. Faith, Hope, and Charity, together form the supernatural machinery, which will carry us through the heaviest slough of difficulty, and still make our way to Heaven in the bad times of life, times from which no life is exempt. The habits of the three theological virtues are in us by Baptism. Charity we fling away by any mortal sin; but Hope remains, unless we despair; and Faith, unless we turn unbelievers (see *Aquinas Ethicus*, i. 357). When we have lost any of the three, we can get it back; indeed we must get it back, if we are to save our souls. There is no finer story in Roman History than that of the Senate going out to meet the Consul, whose imprudence had risked and lost the disastrous battle of Cannæ, and thanking him for that "he had not despaired of the republic." And there is no better practical conclusion to our Conferences on the theological virtues, than a resolution, whatever other false steps we have taken, never to resign the habit and the exercise of Hope. *I look to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. Though he should kill me, yet will I hope in him* (Psalm xxvi. 13; Job xiii. 15).

CONFERENCE XIII.

THE VALUE OF ASCETICISM.

Trinity Sunday, 13 June, 1897.

THE title and matter of this Conference is suggested by an article in *The Spectator*, April 17, 1897, principally the following portions.

"Though it in no sense inclines us to alter the position which we have always taken up—namely, that the spiritual value of asceticism is often grossly exaggerated, and that man has a right to enjoy to the full the legitimate and innocent pleasures of life—we feel bound to note that there is a certain value in asceticism. Asceticism is neither the cause nor the effect of holiness, nor even its proof and sign. There have been plenty of men who have been deeply ascetic in their habits, and yet lived very bad lives. . . . Again, there have been thousands of men whose goodness of life and nobility of spirit have been beyond question, who have been genuinely fond of a good dinner and a good glass of wine, and have revelled in an easy chair and a pleasant and comfortable existence. . . . *Per se*, and in its essentials, Christianity has nothing to do with asceticism. Our Lord was not an ascetic, and showed no special favour to ascetics. Indeed, He

may be said by His teaching and example to have put a curb on the tendency of the Hebrews (like all other Asiatics) to overrate asceticism, and to consider those who ran into the extravagances of bodily mortification as specially holy. . . . But though we hold that a man need not be an ascetic, or in any sense a believer in asceticism, to be a good Christian, and realise the practical piety of Luther's belief that God would not have made 'excellent large pike' so good to the taste if He had not meant them to be eaten with relish, we still cannot doubt that there is a place for asceticism in the world. The ascetic is not necessarily a Christian, or the Christian an ascetic, but for all that the ascetic habit has a good deal to be said for it. If there were nothing in asceticism but affectation in the matter of drink and diet, dress and ways of life, how comes it that mankind in all ages and in all places has given a special reverence to asceticism? There is, so far as we know, no race of fairly civilized human beings who have not regarded asceticism and the true ascetic with a kind of awe. . . . The ground on which mankind pays deference to asceticism is clear enough. The ascetic is, *prima facie*, a man who has won a victory over powers which ordinary people find to be so strong and so difficult to subdue. Most men, when they think of the matter at all, realise that in the body and its desires they have a most formidable enemy entrenched, if not within, at any rate at the very gates of the soul. They see by countless examples around them that if the foe is not kept under, and is

allowed to get full control, he will ruin and destroy what Bunyan called 'the town of *Man's soul*.' . . . The honour paid to asceticism is, in truth, the homage always paid to the conqueror. Even when we think a battle unnecessary, or even ill-judged, or when we believe that the end could have been far more easily secured without a struggle, we cannot refuse our meed of praise to the man who has fought a hard battle and won it. There is something of the same feeling universally felt for the man who does some great feat of physical strength. The philosopher may tell us that it is quite useless to run, or jump, or throw a ball faster and swifter than any one has done before, but in spite of that we are all attracted by the man who makes his body do so much. And besides our admiration for the mere victory over the body, there is present in such cases a sense of gratitude. Mankind are rightly grateful to the athlete for showing them how much the powers of the human body can be extended and developed. . . . In the same way the true ascetic . . earns the gratitude of mankind. He shows them that, after all, the soul is not so entirely at the mercy of the bodily needs as they might otherwise suppose. But for him the world might really come to believe that man was the abject bondman of the conveniences of life, and that without bed and fire, house and candle, three meals a day, and a certain amount of self-indulgence, he would cease to exist. . . . Depend upon it, the natural forces of the world will always keep asceticism alive. Certain natures will always practise

asceticism for its victory over self, and for the sense of power which it brings, and at the same time the world at large will always reverence it as the quality which belongs to those who have overcome the strong. Asceticism is not, as some people seem to believe, an acceptable form of reparation for sin, but in spite of that, and though it must take lower ground, it has a distinct value, and so a real place on the world's stage."

Cleon, in *The Knights*, for once gives excellent advice to Demus, when he says:

ὦ δαιμόνιε, μὴ τοῦ λέγοντος ἴσθι.
My good sir, be not every speaker's prey.[1]

It is the mark of the educated man that he is not the prey of the last novelist, journalist, poet, philosopher, or social reformer, who has gained his ear, or supplied him with an hour's reading; that he can take out his pencil and annotate what he reads, marking what he agrees with and what he disagrees with, and why; the course of the argument, the suppressed premises, the gross assumptions, the reason and the rhetoric of the whole production. In these days, when men will read everything, and so much is written that is incompatible with the Catholic faith, the development of this faculty is an important part of a Catholic education; and the warning, ὦ δαιμόνιε, μὴ τοῦ λέγοντος ἴσθι, deserves a place among the *Maxims of the Kingdom of Heaven*. A priest of much experience once remarked that the best course of philosophy for young Catholic

[1] *Knights*, 860.

laymen would be a series of dissections and demonstrations of the reason and unreason that are blended in the clever articles of our periodicals, where they touch on faith and morals. Such a dissection we will attempt of the article before us.

We said in the last Conference that the only good things of which it is impossible to have too much are the theological virtues. Asceticism, by which we understand fasting and all other painful practices, freely taken up precisely because they are painful to the body, is not a theological virtue, and may be pushed too far. "The spiritual value of asceticism is often grossly exaggerated"—in the East, but not in England. The fact that for nearly nine months in the year we are busy defending ourselves against wet and cold, is one of many causes that check asceticism in this country. Protestantism of course is another.

"Man has a right to enjoy to the full the legitimate and innocent pleasures of life." The word "right" is somewhat strangely used in what is not a question of justice, but of temperance. Doubtless what is meant is that man does right "to enjoy to the full," &c.; where the words "legitimate and innocent" almost make the proposition a tautology. But it must be observed that pleasures may be legitimate and innocent in themselves, and yet to enjoy them to the full may become wrong in certain circumstances, *e.g.*, the pleasure of visiting abroad when one ought to be at home looking after one's household. Moreover, asceticism is pursued as a counsel and work of supererogation, not as a duty.

It may be quite right to breakfast, but better to fast.

Asceticism, as we shall endeavour to show, is an "effect of holiness," not infallibly "its proof and sign," because it may arise from other causes. There have certainly been "men who have been deeply ascetic in their habits, and yet lived very bad lives."

We are all, it may be presumed, "genuinely fond of a good dinner and a good glass of wine," and "an easy chair." If we use these things as refreshments from toil, our "goodness of life and nobility of spirit" may be "beyond question." But if these are the main things that we live for, if we "revel" in them without thought of self-denial, if "a pleasant and comfortable existence" is the summary of our biography, no one need look to us for lessons of nobility and goodness.

The writer's next two assertions are portentous. "*Per se*, and in its essentials, Christianity has nothing do do with asceticism." It was quite an accident, then, that the Apostles, whose actions equally with their words were an embodiment of the Christian spirit, could describe themselves: *We both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no fixed abode: in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in labours, in watchings, in fastings* (1 Cor. iv. 11; 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5). These were the unhappy necessities of first beginnings! Revelling in easy chairs and in pleasant and comfortable existences was to be the order of the day, when Christianity was established and perfect! Surely the essential features

of Christianity are best discerned in the lives of men most intensely Christian, the Saints. If there be any feature that the Saints all have in common, we may pronounce that an essential feature of Christian holiness. Now the first feature that strikes us in the lives of the Saints is a marked tendency to asceticism. Some Saints carried it further, and some less far, but no Saint is without it. They practised austerities, the recital of which frightens us. This cannot be an accident or a mistake. They were ascetics because they were Saints, that is, men imbued above their fellows with the Spirit of Christ.

"Our Lord was not an ascetic." And yet He fasted forty days, *and he ate nothing in those days* (St. Luke iv. 2). Is this an oversight on the part of the writer, or does he belong to the school of those who strike out whatever is marvellous from the Gospels, and then prove what they will from what it suits them to retain? "And showed no special favour to ascetics." Not, for instance, to John the Baptist, whom He commends for the austerity of his life (St. Luke vii. 24—28); and is at pains to explain why His disciples do not for the present fast like John's, and promises that other days shall come after His departure, *and then they shall fast in those days* (St. Luke vii. 31—34; St. Matt. ix. 14, 15). There was reason why He should show no special favour to ascetics like the Pharisees (St. Luke xviii. 12; St. Matt. vi. 16; xxiii. 27, 28).

With "Luther's belief that God would not have made 'excellent large pike' so good to the taste if

He had not meant them to be eaten with relish," we entirely fall in, only adding with the author of Ecclesiastes (iii. 1—8) that *all things have their season, a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to get, and a time to lose*, &c.; and so a time to eat large pike with relish, about one o'clock on Friday afternoon, and a time to fast, in the morning.

As we admit much that the writer says, it is gratifying to have him admitting to us that "there is no race of fairly civilized human beings who have not regarded asceticism and the true ascetic with awe." He says it is "the homage paid to the conqueror," and starts the parallel case of the athlete. But do we regard the athlete "with awe"? Only when we are still very small boys. Is not the awe with which all men regard the true ascetic the outcome of a conviction, or at least a surmise and suspicion, that the ascetic is above them and nearer to God?

Ascetic theology forms a whole department in a Catholic library. Writers in this department assign three motives for the practice of asceticism—to atone for past sins, to subdue one's lower nature, and to obtain favours of God. The second motive the writer in the *Spectator* allows, the third he ignores, the first he absolutely rejects. "Asceticism is not, as some people seem to believe, an acceptable form of reparation for sin." "As some people seem to believe!" To wit, all who believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

Our Lord says: *The men of Ninive did penance at the preaching of Jonas* (St. Matt. xii. 41). In the

third chapter of the Book of Jonas we read how they did penance, and to what effect: *And the men of Ninive believed in God, and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest even to the least. And the word came to the king of Ninive, . . . and he caused it to be proclaimed: . . . Let neither men nor beasts, oxen nor sheep, taste anything; let them not feed nor drink water. . . . And God had mercy with regard to the evil which he had said that he would do to them, and he did it not.*

To strike at the idea of suffering in expiation for sin is to strike at the very root of Christianity, which is the doctrine of the Atonement. The Crucifixion of our Lord is the consecration of asceticism as a reparation for sin. Death on the Cross was not a persecution that Christ underwent because He could not decline it; He voluntarily laid down His life (St. John x. 17, 18). More than the forty days' fast, the Passion characterises the great Atoner and the great Ascetic. The idea is a simple one: a child can master it. Children have been known, when dreading some punishment from their parents, to set about some task that was uncongenial to them, and show up their work in reparation for their fault and in deprecation of further proceedings. Some self-inflicted penance is the best token and evidence of true repentance. It is repentance's natural fruit.

For asceticism obtaining favours from God, we need but refer to the Epistle read on Ash Wednesday from Joel ii. 12—19, and to the practice of the Apostles, narrated in Acts xiii. 2, 3, a practice still

kept up by the Church in her Ember-day Ordination fasts.

Altogether the article that we have been commenting on is a singular setting aside of Scripture.

A practical word in conclusion. It shall be borrowed from the Prophet Daniel (iv. 24): *Redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with mercies to the poor.* This was spoken to a king, threatened with divine vengeance, who had no mind to imitate the king of Ninive in his fasting. And perhaps we may not be disposed or able to push our ascetic practices very far. Yet some way we must find to atone for our sins, to diminish the expiation that will be otherwise exacted of us in Purgatory. The easiest we shall find is the way of almsdeeds. We are far enough from the doctrine reprobated by Plato (Rep. 365), that one should "do wrong, and sacrifice out of the proceeds." We do not contemplate almsdeeds to buy leave to sin. But, sin committed, almsdeeds serve, with repentance and sorrow, to expiate the sin. They are preventives also and remedies against sin. Sin is ever some form of selfishness; and almsdeeds go to make a man unselfish. So again final impenitence is the last throb of a hard heart, but almsdeeds go to soften the heart. Understand this especially of almsdeeds accompanied by personal service and visiting of the poor. Such visits may have their motive in curiosity, the same inquisitiveness and love of novelty taking one man among the tribes of Central Africa, and another down into unexplored strata of London society. But we augur a better

motive for the work carried on by this University among the poor of London. We put down much of it to human kindness, much also to Christian charity. And we are determined that the little Catholic element in the University shall go forward in this good work, though the details of our advance must perforce stand over for arrangement.

Meanwhile three practical counsels. (1) Have a budget of charity: that is, set aside a fixed portion of your income for purposes of charity and religion. True, you must be just before you are generous: you must not leave lawful debts unpaid in order to relieve the poor. But then you want self-denial not to contract debt for mere self-indulgence. It is hard, however necessary after the event, that what was set aside for God and His poor, and for the expiation of your sins, should be swallowed in payment for the gratification of *vain and unprofitable desires* (1 Timothy vi. 9). (2) Be a member of some charitable society, such as that of St. Vincent of Paul. Single-handed charity is continually thrown away upon undeserving objects. (3) If you are too shy, too maladroit, too busy, to go among the poor yourself, then undertake the letter-writing, keep the accounts, or best of all, find out a great leader in works of charity, and get on his staff; do as Judas did, carry the purse (St. John xii. 6), your own purse, into which you will let your chief dip his hand, till your whole budget of charity and religion is exhausted; then add a little more. But choose your leader well.

CONFERENCE XIV.

THE ADORATION OF THE SACRED HEART.

Second Sunday after Pentecost, 20 June, 1897.

In the early years of Her Majesty's reign, the years also of the first Oxford Movement, there was a magazine called *The British Critic*, now buried in the recesses of the Bodleian. Newman, Mozley, and other leaders of thought at Oxford, wrote in it. It is quite a mirror of the temper of those times. In the volume for 1839, there is an article (no. 49, art. vi.) on *The Revival of Jesuitism*, displaying at once considerable knowledge and considerable ignorance. Among other things it detects a dangerous Jesuit intrigue in the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, and unsound theology in the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The intrigue we can afford to laugh at; it has gone on for sixty years, and has not shaken Her Majesty's throne. But the theological question is of abiding interest. These are the writer's views:

"It has ever been the distinctive property of the worship of the Church of Rome, from the time that the fable of transubstantiation was first incorporated with her creed, in all her devotional exercises relating to the holy Jesus, 'to convert the Godhead

into flesh,' to give to that human substance which He took from the Blessed Virgin the properties of His eternal nature. Instead of adoring in the mystery of the Incarnation the fulness of the Godhead which united itself to the form of man, they give to the flesh and blood *materially* the heavenly virtue which belongs to the spiritual part of His being. . . . The constant aim is that the devotee may imbibe a sense of the *humanity* of Christ; the Saviour appears in their legends as a being of human feelings and affections; there is no trace of the reverence and awe inspired by the presence of God " (p. 176).

The logic of this passage is invincible. It cuts clean away all ground for the adoration of the Sacred Heart. It also *dissolves Christ* (1 St. John iv. 3), undoes the mystery of the Incarnation, and reinstates the heresy of Nestorius, which was condemned in the General Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431. The logic is good; the premises, if true, prove the conclusion; but what theology!

The doctrine of Nestorius was summed up in one affirmation, true enough, that Mary was the Mother of Christ, *χριστοτόκος*, and one denial, in which lay his heresy, that she was not Mother of God, *θεοτόκος*: whence it followed that the Son of God was one person, and the Son of Mary another, and that the Angel's assurance that *the holy one that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God* (St. Luke i. 35), was not properly true, and really meant no more than that He was to be an eminently holy man, " the holy Jesus," but not God. " Never

will I adore as God a child four days old," said Nestorius. The Council anathematized him for a heretic, defined Mary's title of *θεοτόκος*, and the faithful people of Ephesus, that night jubilant, escorted the Fathers with torches home to their lodgings.

The fruit of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon (A.D. 431, 450) is the definition of the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the one person of the Word; which is thus expressed in the Athanasian Creed: "Who, though He be God and man, yet is not two, but one Christ; one, we say, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity unto God: one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but in unity of person."

Consequently, as one and the same person is at once God and Man, we can predicate of this same person both divine and human attributes.

This is called the *communicatio idiomatum*, or *communication of characteristics*. Thus we say that God was born, God suffered, God died; nor is it necessary to add *in the flesh*, though that is always understood. Or we may say, *the Son of Mary is the Eternal God*. We may also say, *the Man Christ Jesus is eternal*, meaning in His divine nature. But we may not put it in the abstract, *the humanity of Christ is eternal*, for that would mean that He is eternal as man, which He is not. Similarly the humanity of Christ is not omnipresent, nor omnipotent, nor self-existent, nor infinite. The Man Christ Jesus is all these things, but not as man. Briefly, the

humanity of Christ is not God, but the Man Christ is God.

We must notice a slight ambiguity that besets the word *humanity*. It may be taken for a purely abstract substantive, for what one might have called the *humanness* of Christ, or the fact of His being man. But it is usually employed in a concrete sense, to denote that whereby He is man, namely, His human Body and Soul, and in that sense we shall speak of the Sacred Humanity.

The Sacred Humanity is not God, it is not eternal, it is not infinite, it is not everywhere, but only in Heaven and in the Blessed Sacrament. There are divine attributes which cannot possibly attach to a human body and soul. But the "moral attributes," as they are called, of the Godhead do attach to the Sacred Humanity. These are principally sanctity and dignity. The Sacred Humanity is holy with all the holiness of God; it is infinitely holy. Though it is not God, yet it is of divine dignity, because it is the Humanity of the Son of God—the Flesh and Blood, Hands, Feet, Heart, Body and Soul of the Eternal Word. It is penetrated through and through with the Divinity, like a live coal with fire. It is alive and instinct with Godhead. This causes St. Cyril of Alexandria to say it is "divinised," τεθεοποίηται. Being of divine dignity, the Sacred Humanity is adorable with the one adoration that is given to God Himself, whose Humanity it is, and inseparable from Him. It is adored, not as Flesh and Blood simply, but as the Flesh and Blood of the Son of God. This is why

the Church of God ever makes so much of the Sacred Humanity. You cannot make too much of it; for it is sovereignly holy and sovereignly adorable.

On the text, *Adore ye his footstool, because it is holy* (Psalm xcviii. 5), in connection with that other text, *Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool* (Isaias lxvi. 1; cf. St. Matt. v. 35), St. Augustine writes (*Enarrationes in Psalmis*, ad h l.): "I am thrown into perplexity. I fear to adore the earth; and on the other hand, I am afraid of not adoring the footstool of my Lord. In my doubt I turn to Christ, and I find how, without impiety, one may adore earth, and without impiety may adore His footstool. For He took earth of earth; for flesh is of earth, and of the flesh of Mary He took flesh. And because in that same flesh He here walked, and gave us that flesh to eat for our salvation, and no one eats that flesh without having first adored it, a way is found of adoring that footstool of the Lord, and how we may not only not sin by adoring, but should sin if we did not adore."

Similar is the language of St. Leo (Serm. 73): *Ut non dubia fide sed certissima scientia teneretur eam naturam in Dei Patris consessuram throno, quæ jacuerat in sepulcro:* "That with no doubtful faith, but with most certain knowledge it should be held, that that nature was to be seated with God the Father on His throne, which had lain in the sepulchre." "To be seated with God the Father on His throne," means to be adorable with the adoration that is given to God the Father. The phrase is explained

by the Church's hymn at Matins on Ascension Day:

> Peccat caro, mundat caro,
> Regnat Deus Dei caro.

"Flesh sinneth, flesh cleanseth: the flesh of God reigneth as God." And with regard to the mystery of Holy Communion, St. John Chrysostom writes (*De Sacerdotio*, iii. 4): "He that sitteth on high with the Father is held in human hands, and is given to all that wish to compass and embrace Him."

To return to *The British Critic*. The Church Catholic, in a formulary which the Church of England has borrowed of her, repudiates all wish "to convert the Godhead into flesh." What she teaches is that flesh has been so assumed by the Godhead as to be the very flesh of God, and thus to possess, not all "the properties of His eternal nature," for eternity itself is incommunicable, but the moral attributes of that nature, to wit, the divine sanctity, majesty, dignity, and adorableness. We do "adore in the mystery of the Incarnation the fulness of the Godhead," but we adore therewith also, "the form of man" to which that fulness is united. We adore both natures, as they are united in one person. To insist on adoring the divine nature only, is to err with Nestorius and deny the hypostatic union.

What is meant by "flesh and blood *materially*" is not easy to say; and "the spiritual part of His being" is a strange expression for the Divinity of Christ, as though He had no human

soul. We adore, however, the material flesh and blood of Christ, not in themselves apart from His Divinity, but as the flesh and blood of God: for He who spoke of *my flesh* and *my blood* (St. John vi. 54) was God: that is exactly what Nestorius denied, and the Church defined at Ephesus.

That "the constant aim (of the Church of Rome) is that the devotee may imbibe a sense of the *humanity* of Christ," we most willingly allow, and glory in the same. "The Saviour appears as a being of human feelings and affections" in our "legends," to be sure; also in the four Gospels, *e.g.*, St. John xi. 35. The devotion of the Forty Hours was not established in England in 1839. Had the writer ever witnessed the homage there paid to the Blessed Sacrament, he might not have written so lightly: "There is no trace of the reverence and awe inspired by the presence of God." Only, if "the presence of God" here means the presence of God in Christ, that again is a piece of Nestorianism. God is not simply present in Christ; Christ Himself is God.

Nor is "the holy Jesus" (an expression which our author has borrowed from Jeremy Taylor) wholly free from the taint of Nestorianism, or even Arianism. "Holy Mary," as often as you like, but her Divine Son is Holiness itself. There is some savour of heresy in the expression, as there would be of treason in calling the King "my Lord."

And thus much of *The British Critic*. The article is anonymous, probably the work of some clergyman in this University, a man well acquainted with the

history of Nestorius, and one who would have disclaimed all participation in his heresy. But there are many unconscious Nestorians among non-Catholic Christians. And even we Catholics often do not know as much as we should know of the Incarnation. It is from a right hold upon the Incarnation that all spiritual good has its origin, alike in theory and in practice. Error brings out truth, and there is no heresy that brings out the doctrine of the Incarnation so thoroughly as the heresy of the acute and subtle rationalist, Nestorius.

As we adore our Lord's Humanity as a whole, not, however, away from His Divinity, so we may specialise and concentrate our adoration upon a part of that Humanity, without exclusion of the rest. Specialisation is not separation. Thus the festival of Corpus Christi, and all the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, is an honouring of the Body and Blood of Christ, along with His Soul and Divinity; but it is upon that Body and Blood, as present on our altars, living and "divinised" (*τεθεοποιημένον*, "replete with divinity," St. Cyril), that the adoration is specially fixed. So there is a feast and a *cultus* of the Precious Blood and of the Five Wounds. We adore that Blood, and we adore those Wounds, with the one adoration that is given to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made Man So also we adore the Sacred Heart, not in any metaphorical sense of the word *heart*, as when it is said that God was *touched with grief of heart within* (Gen. vi. 6), but we do adore the living, material Heart of flesh of the Eternal Word,

adorable as it is because it is the Heart of the Son of God.

The only question is, why we select the Heart of Christ for special adoration, and the answer is two-fold, first, on the matter of fitness, and then on the matter of fact. In point of fitness, the heart is generally taken for the symbol of love. To give one's heart is to give one's love. A wounded heart means a wounded love, the pain of ingratitude, when love and care have been thrown away upon the undeserving and thankless. If any of you have ever felt this "serpent's tooth," you will know that it is almost like the physical pain of a bleeding, inward wound. All Christians must recognise the mighty love that the Saviour of the world has borne and still bears to those for whom He has given His life, and how ill that love has been requited in all generations (St. Matt. xxiii. 37). Besides the Crucifixion, Catholics will think of the further immensity of love shown in the Blessed Sacrament, and how that has been dishonoured. We adore the Heart of Jesus in recognition of this love, and in reparation of our own and others' ingratitude.

In point of fact, the spread of this special and explicit worship of the Sacred Heart had its origin in the private revelation made by our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque at the close of the seventeenth century. But the credentials of this worship at the present day are no longer any mere private revelation, as at first, but the general acceptance of the faithful, the approbation of the episcopate, and its ratification by the Holy See. The

devotion is no private property of the Society of Jesus. You see an altar or a picture of the Sacred Heart, and it does not on that account occur to you to think that you are in a Jesuit church. In churches where there are many altars, you expect to find one dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Such a movement of the Universal Church cannot but be under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

The advantages that we reap from adoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus are briefly two. Intellectually, we are kept from sliding into Nestorianism, and are rooted in the right faith upon that central doctrine of Christianity: *the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.* Morally, we are impressed with the abiding reality and continued personal existence of Jesus Christ our Saviour, still living in our midst, still loving us.

For further elucidation of the doctrine here delivered, see Hunter's *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, Treatise Eleven, chap. iii., *The union of the Natures.*

This brings our Conferences to a close. We thank you for your good attendance, which has been the making of these Conferences. A great fruit you have gathered is the fact of your being drawn together and knowing yourselves as a Catholic body. Will you take home with you this lesson, that wherever you go, you should ever live in touch with your fellow-Catholics? *Væ soli!* Woe to the Catholic that lives in isolation! Only a giant is fit

to do that: but we ordinary men are weak singly, and strong only as the members of a body, where there is a public opinion and a common spirit to keep us up. This is the meaning of the institution of the Church, that the working out of salvation on earth is a social labour, as also the happiness of Heaven is the happiness of a community, *the holy city Jerusalem.* (Apoc. xxi 10—27). Never, therefore, if you can help it, live where you have no Catholic friends and no one knows you to be a Catholic.

OXFORD LENT TERM, 1898.

CONFERENCE XV.

PROSELYTISM.

Third Sunday after Epiphany, 23 January, 1898.

"PROSELYTISM" is one of those "question-begging appellations" which stand for something that every one repudiates. A *proselyte*[1] was a Gentile who *came over to* Judaism as a convert. Proselytes were very numerous, and they bore on the whole a bad name. There was a saying of the Rabbis, not to trust a proselyte unto the twenty-third generation. They are only once mentioned by our Lord, not with praise. *Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him a child of hell twice as much as yourselves* (Matt. xxiii. 15). Observe that there was no obligation on a Gentile to become a proselyte to Judaism. The Gentile was bound to adore one true God, and keep the rest of the ten commandments, except

[1] There is a large literature on the subject: see Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v.

that of the Sabbath: he was not bound to turn Jew.

On the other hand, when Christianity was preached, a man who heard it, and had it brought home to his conscience, was bound to become a Christian. This is apparent throughout the New Testament: cf. Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 18, 36; Acts xiii. 48; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. The reason was two-fold: first, because Christianity is the Kingdom of the Messiah, who rules by rights over all men (cf. Psalms ii. and lxxi.; Luke xix. 14, 27); secondly, because *all men have sinned and are fallen short of the glory of God*, and can only find forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. iii. 23—25). The preachers of the gospel avoided the word *proselyte*, with its evil associations, and call their converts *neophytes* (1 Tim. iii. 6), as *newly planted*, or rather as *newly blended and incorporated* with Jesus Christ, becoming members of His mystical Body (Rom. vi. 5).

All denominations of Christians in this country are generally agreed that it is well done to bring a man of no religion to believe in Christ, to receive baptism, and frequent some Christian church or chapel. Witness our Bible Societies, our Church Missionary Societies, and even our Colonial Bishops. The odious name of *proselytism* is not given in reference to such a conversion.

When heresies arose, the Church proclaimed the duty of reverting to orthodoxy; when schisms, of returning to unity, of "being with the bishop," as St. Cyprian says. She could not endure her

children being Arians or Nestorians, and made every effort to recover them from such heresies. It is true that heresy and orthodoxy, schism and Catholic unity, were very strangely mixed up together in the fourth century. That was in great part due to the unholy preponderance which the Roman Emperors, some of them Arians, had been able to assume in the Church. The Roman Emperor was a sort of god upon earth. When he became a Christian, he protected the Church, but in no small degree controlled it also. The Church, however, righted herself, and dissociated herself from heresy and from imperialism.

When the revolt from the Church in the sixteenth century took place, the new-born Protestantism proselytised with a strong hand. It is enough to mention the 'penal laws' in England and in Ireland. Never did proselytism go greater lengths. But the modern mind is very different from the mind of Elizabeth and her counsellors. It is now considered that a man had better indeed be a Christian of some sort, but that one denomination of Christianity is as good as another. This idea is not uncommon among ill-instructed Catholics. They do not seem to understand why a Methodist should become a Catholic, or the advantages which as Catholics they possess over the Methodist connection—the truth of salvation in its fulness instead of fragments of truth; the sacraments and sacramental forgiveness of sin; and a vastly heightened chance of salvation—to say nothing of the objective obligation of being a Catholic and nothing short of a Catholic.

This obligation other Christian denominations will not see. They are indignant when any baptized person tears himself away from the associations of his youth, to go among strangers and to become a Roman Catholic. They cannot conceive any man in his right senses taking such a step. They are sure there must have been some undue influence, some terrorising and intimidation of the conscience, some trickery or deception: he cannot know what a horrid extravagance Romanism really is. For, while they allow that all forms of Christianity, Romanism included, are more or less good, there is lurking somewhere at the back of their heads a notion which has come down to them by heredity from grandfathers and great-grandmamas, that Romanism is the most corrupt of Christianities, so corrupt, indeed, as to be barely Christian at all. How then could X. Y., possessing as he did already in Methodism, or Congregationalism, or in High Church Anglicanism, all gospel grace that a reasonable man could wish for, how could he have gone and turned Roman Catholic? One word is the explanation of it all, *proselytism*.

We certainly have no mind to intimidate, cajole, or hoodwink any person in order to draw him to the Catholic Church, and that for one excellent reason amongst many reasons, because the person so converted would be most unlikely to stay with us and remain a Catholic. The panic would pass off, the lie would be detected, the truth concealed would out, and he would be gone from the midst of us. To make a Catholic of a man who is not likely to

remain a Catholic, is positively to do him an injury. Back he flies, and his last state is worse than the first. As proselytism now signifies the use of unfair means to a good end; as it signifies any method of drawing people to Catholicism that is not perfectly straightforward and honest, we repudiate and abhor proselytism.

At the same time the Catholic Church is bound to manifest herself, and the Saviour whose salvation she bears to men. She is the city built on a mountain which cannot be hid (Matt. v. 14); she is the light which must not be let burn under a bushel (Matt. v. 15). One of her four great festivals is the Epiphany, which signifies *manifestation* or *showing forth*. She is a debtor to all men (Rom. i. 14); she has a message for them all, and even a command (2 Cor. v. 19, 20). Woe to her if she preach not the Gospel (1 Cor. ix. 16). She is in the world to show forth Christ. And this is the office of the whole body, not of the clergy only, but of every Catholic in his station and degree. It is your office in this University in some manner more than of the religious who have come here. You are more in evidence than they are in the familiar intercourse of daily companionship. Piety in a religious is taken for granted, it is his profession; in you it is looked for with interest, and taken not without a certain grateful surprise. It is yours to draw men towards Catholicism, not by thrusting controversy upon them, still less disparaging what they venerate in religion—you are not likely to be so injudicious—but silently and unostentatiously by your lives and

behaviour. Not that I look for conversions in Oxford. There are many difficulties in the way of that. But whenever I see a number of undergraduates together, on the river or in the playing-fields, I say to myself: 'There are men there who will die Catholics; in twenty-five or thirty years God's grace will have led them to the true Church.' So it has been for the past half century; so, doubt not, it will be. Who knows how the first advances of that grace are gradually being made now? In your persons they may be learning for the first time that there is nothing in Roman Catholicism incompatible with the best qualities that make the glory of Oxford, and of English-speaking races all over the earth.

Two words of SS. Peter and Paul, and I have done. *Ready ever to offer a defence to every one that asks you an account of the hope that is in you*, says St. Peter (1 Pet. iii. 15); and St. Paul, *Let your speech be ever gracious, seasoned with salt, to know how to answer every one that asketh you* (Col. iv. 6). Which means that you be ready to say, when you are asked: 'Catholics believe this,' 'We don't believe that,' 'That is an open question;' and at times have the modesty to confess, 'I am not sure,' or 'I don't know.' Better say that than assent to uncatholic doctrine.

The second word is a Greek word which St. Paul addresses to the Corinthians, telling them to be ἑδραῖοι (1 Cor. xv. 58), literally, *seated*, from ἕδρα, *a seat*. It recalls Shakespeare's "the seated hills," and Jeremy Taylor's, "then let us sit down in

religion." It denotes, not listlessness, but what I have heard put down as a common attribute of Oxford men, attaching, I imagine, rather to the junior members of the University, *quiet assurance*. 'A Roman Catholic? Why, what else do you take me for?' In the matter of the Catholic faith this *quiet assurance* cannot fail to be also a *prudential assurance*.

CONFERENCE XVI.

WITCHCRAFT, A STUDY IN THE SUBJECTIVE METHOD.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, 30 January, 1898.

WHAT I call "the subjective method of proof" consists in observing the sequence of ideas current among mankind, and arguing thence the sequence of facts thereto corresponding, as though to know the ideas and the state of men's minds at any given epoch was to know the facts about which the ideas are conversant. On this method, if we wish to know whether a thing be right or wrong, we have only to enquire whether men nowadays generally hold it to be right or wrong: the conscience of mankind at this rate being the standard of morality. By the same method, if we wish to know the true principles of architecture, or the laws of taste in painting, poetry, or music, or the art of government, or any other point that is a topic of general conversation and public opinion, we have but to mingle in society and read the literature of the day, and this knowledge of ideas will prove to be also a knowledge of things: we shall understand what is wise administration, or a noble edifice, or a fine piece of music—for our time.

There are great advantages about this method: it is a vast saving of research, it enables us to make up our minds with very little trouble. An instance

of this method, applied to religious truth might be the following: 'Our forefathers were much disturbed by what the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews called: *a certain terrible expectation of judgment, and a burning fire that is coming to destroy the adversaries* (Heb. x. 27); educated men at the present day have put out of their heads all apprehension of the day of judgment; therefore there is no day of judgment to be apprehended.' Or again: 'Past ages believed in witchcraft: the present age does not believe in witchcraft: therefore there is no such thing as witchcraft.' It will be observed that this method entirely dispenses with objective proof. No theology has shown that a day of judgment will never come; no science has demonstrated that such a creature as a real witch is an impossibility. "That the disbelief in witchcraft . . . is the result, not of any series of definite arguments, or of new discoveries, but of a gradual, insensible, yet profound modification of the habits of thought prevailing in Europe; that it is, thus, a direct consequence of the progress of civilisation, and of its influence upon opinions; must be evident to any one who impartially investigates the question. If we ask what new arguments were discovered during the decadence of the belief, we must admit that they were quite inadequate to account for the change" (E. G. J.).[1]

Still we have heard of rude awakenings of individuals, and even of whole classes and nations of men, facts breaking in upon them quite contrary to

[1] Edward Gibbon Junior, cited as E. G. J., is a man of straw, but the opinions put in his mouth are typical opinions of the day, opinions which Newman spent his life in fighting as well before as after 1845.

their established ideas. There is always danger in trusting to an idea, because it is an idea, however common. It is not a scientific confidence. It may be *secure*, in the old sense of that word, but it is not safe.

But it will be said: 'Surely the beliefs of a civilised age must be nearer approaches to fact than the beliefs of an uncivilised one.' Yes, if those beliefs are constituent elements of a genuine civilisation. But there is a spurious civilisation, which is a real decadence,—such as the civilisation dominant at the French Court in the reign of Louis XV. With genuine civilisation there are mixed up many elements of decadence. Europe is more civilised in the nineteenth than it was in the thirteenth century. It would be a paradox to deny that. But not everything that we see and hear around us is an evidence of our advance. We have not among us the architects of the thirteenth century, nor the schoolmen. King Edward I. would not greatly admire our flock of paupers, nor the tone of mind of some of our wealthy and well-to-do members of society. There are sounds in the air that may prove to be heralds' trumpets, proclaiming our last hour and the end of our triumphs. It is very rash, therefore, to point to every idea, or every absence of idea, in the modern mind, and contend that it must be in accordance with fact, because it is modern.

If we continue to progress, the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries will, in their judgment, correct our errors, as we in our judgment correct what we pronounce to be the errors of the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries. Now it is observable that the progress of thought is not always in a straight line, leaving the past irrevocably behind, but in a curve, and a curve that sometimes re-enters upon itself. One element of our civilisation is Spiritualism. It is somewhat of a growing element. Now Spiritualism, and Theosophy also, is merely ancient Magic and ancient Witchcraft renamed. If the world grows more unchristian, or what is the same thing, more rationalistic, it is quite within the bounds of probability that Spiritualism may take great hold of men's minds in the future.[1] Loss of faith often brings credulity in its train. Men will believe the devil, or any other deceiver, as Eve did, when they no longer believe God. St. Paul makes a prophecy on this subject. *The coming (of the man of sin) is by the working of Satan in all power and signs and lying wonders, and in all seduction of iniquity, among them that perish, because they have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved; and therefore shall God send upon them the operation of error, to believe lying* (2 Thess. ii. 9—11). The belief in what used to be called "the black art" is not yet killed out in civilised man of the rationalist type. Therefore, even by the subjective method, the proof of there being no such art remains incomplete.

Ours is a civilised age certainly, an age of advanced progress, of criticism, of culture, of education high and wide. Much deference is due to the belief of educated men of our time. Such belief

[1] It is estimated that 100,000 works on Spiritualism are sold yearly in the United States.

may after all be mistaken, but the fact of educated men holding it is an argument of some probability in its favour. Educated men however hold beliefs contrary to one another, even in our time, and even on the subject of witchcraft. To some extent they all are agreed that, in the rough and rude justice of bygone centuries, hundreds of persons were put to death for witchcraft, who were innocent of that crime. This belief we may accept as true. It was however no peculiarity of witchcraft, that innocent people were proclaimed guilty and done to death under that name. Perhaps quite as many innocent persons were put to death as traitors. Edmund Campion, Henry Garnet, and scores of other Catholic priests and laymen, who were sincerely loyal to the thrones of Elizabeth and James I., suffered under those monarchs the penalties of treason, not less cruel than the penalties of witchcraft.

Now one of the fallacies of the subjective method of proof is this. The reasoner takes hold of what happens to be his own opinion and the opinion of his school of thought, or as Bacon would have said, of his "tribe," and calls upon all the world to bow down and accept it as "the belief of educated men." Of some educated men certainly, but other men, quite as well educated, reject it, and brand it as a mere "idol of the tribe." The disbelief in witchcraft,—as though witchcraft were a mere imposture or hallucination, there being really no devil to deal with,—is simply an "idol of the tribe" of rationalists. They lie open to the reply which Job made to his

friends: *Therefore you only are men, and wisdom shall die with you? I too have a mind, as you have, and am not your inferior* (Job xii. 1, 2). Rationalism has given a character to our age, but not perhaps the character of progress. The larger is not necessarily the sounder portion of the community. It may be that the true type of the intellectual and moral progress of the nineteenth century is not found in the educated rationalist, but in the educated Christian. Another possibility of error in the application of the subjective method to the annihilation of witchcraft!

I do not hold a brief for the educated Christian of the nineteenth century. I am not the authorised exponent of his views on witchcraft. But, from the conversation that I have had with men of that type, I am led to think that their views might be expressed, tolerably closely, in some such propositions as these.

1. Treason is a crime that has been committed, and may be committed still: so is witchcraft.

2. Treason and witchcraft are alike improbable crimes in England at the present day: therefore of neither the one nor the other is an accusation lightly to be credited: any accused person is presumably not a traitor, nor a witch.

3. Some hundreds of years ago, while many innocent persons were condemned as traitors and as witches, yet attempts against the life and dignity of the Sovereign, and attempts at dealing with the devil so as to obtain præternatural powers, were not uncommon.

4. In some instances at least, præternatural powers were in this manner actually obtained.

"Those men should be treated with scorn, and, indeed, sternly corrected, who ridicule theologians whenever they speak of demons, or attribute to demons any effects, as if these things were entirely fabulous. This error has arisen among some learned men, partly through want of faith, and partly through weakness and imperfection of intellect, . . . for, as Plato says, to refer everything to the senses, and to be incapable of turning away from them, is the greatest impediment to truth" (Gerson). This is an exact delineation of the extent to which the belief in witchcraft is "supported," as E. G. J. says, "by the whole stress of the Church of Rome's infallibility." The Holy Roman Church unquestionably does teach that there are devils, that these devils go about the world, that sometimes they have produced certain sensible effects in the world, and may do so still. The Church is often taken to task by Protestants for going beyond Scripture, but here she repeats simply what is set down in Scripture, no more, as that *the devil goeth about* (1 Pet. v. 8); that there are *spirits of devils doing signs* (Apoc. xvi. 14); that our Lord bade His Apostles, *In my name cast out devils* (Mark xvi. 17), as He did Himself continually, on one occasion sending them into swine (Mark v. 12); that the witch of Endor brought up for Saul the spirit of Samuel (1 Kings xxviii.). So the existence of devils, the possibility of dealing with devils, and the fact of diabolic possession, are things supported also by the whole stress of the

infallibility of Holy Scripture. If "a profound scepticism on all matters connected with the Devil underlies the opinions of almost every educated man" (E. G. J.); such scepticism, applied not to this or that alleged piece of modern *diablerie*, but the very existence of the devil, or the possibility of his working in the world at all, is simple disbelief in the authority of Scripture. Beyond the express letter of Holy Scripture in this matter the teaching of the Catholic Church does not travel. It is an axiom in logic, *ab esse ad posse valet illatio:* "the inference is valid from fact to possibility." The Gospel assures us that there were persons possessed by devils in our Lord's time; therefore diabolic possession is a possibility. The sin of witchcraft is often mentioned both in the Old and the New Testament: therefore there is such a sin, and you may come across a case of it.

But ever since the inspired record of the Bible was complete, that is, for these last eighteen centuries, the Church has never pronounced infallibly on the fact of any one case of witchcraft or of diabolic possession. It is open to a Catholic, without making shipwreck of his faith, to dispute or deny any story of witchcraft or possession that he finds in any history, or in any Saint's Life. Furthermore Catholics may avow, and in our days generally do avow, that numbers of innocent persons have been tortured and put to death on false charges of witchcraft, by bishops and priests, by lay tribunals, by Catholics, and also by Protestants: that many things in fact have been put down to diabolic agency, with which

the devil had nothing to do, or haply, which never took place at all.

In this matter of diabolic action, medieval Catholics were prone, as E. G. J. says, "to expand premises that were furnished by the Church;" in which expansion they committed many errors in point of logic and of the weighing of evidence, and perpetrated in blind haste many cruel deeds. Their conclusions were certainly not strictly drawn from the premises of authority. In our century men go about to expand premises furnished by science, and are equally illogical with their medieval forefathers, equally peremptory and absolute, though not equally cruel. Science has explained much that our ancestors thought præternatural: it has not explained all. To argue that witchcraft never was, or is now extinct, is not science but temerity. Witchcraft has simply changed its name, and is now called Spiritualism. People who have lived in India tell strange stories of doings of native sorcerers, to which the Anglo-Indian, with his preconceived notions, resolutely shuts his eyes. We are very ignorant of what goes on in the lamaseries of Thibet. Doctors do not understand the phenomena of madness with anything like sufficient adequacy to pronounce that there are no cases now of diabolic possession. Of this probability also strange stories are told by priests, who are not altogether fools.

It remains to determine, if we may, why witchcraft is on the whole an unlikely crime in Western Europe at the present day. The explanation is not far to seek. To the minds of our generation, God

is not the overwhelming present reality that He was in "the ages of faith." We say of an atheist that "he believes neither in God nor devil." We recognise that those two beliefs go together. And it is manifest that never, since the first preaching of Christianity, was the devil so little believed in or thought of as in our time. Men never think of dealing with a being, whose existence they scarcely realise, or perhaps utterly disbelieve. Just as blasphemy is a sin of Catholic countries, not of Protestant England, so is witchcraft a crime incident where there is firm faith in Unseen Powers: it falls away with the decay of faith. There is some evil incident to every good: destroy the good, and you remove the evil. In a country where men know the articles of Catholic faith and believe in them intensely, while they have little other knowledge, any one who has lost hope in God and love of Him, and has become desperate in his fortunes, may be strongly tempted to turn for relief to God's enemy, the devil, if he has heard tell of any way in which that potentate may be approached. He knows who he is dealing with, and at what price, but like Faust he may be willing to pay it for present good. Still, as I have said, some form of witchcraft has prevailed, and may again prevail, away from Christianity and even away from Theism. Its votaries do not recognise the being with whom they deal: they call him good,—in fact, substitute him for God. Witchcraft and other superstitious practices are a sort of blight that settles upon true religion, but often also on false religions: indeed they may replace religion.

Our rationalist age, as such, believes no more in devils to hurt us, nor in angels to guard us: it has abolished witchcraft, and likewise prayer: it has drawn a veil over the mouth of hell, and hidden heaven in darkness: it has exorcised superstitious terrors, and dispelled eternal hopes: it has swept away from human vision the life of the world to come, all the awful sublimity, the cloud and the brightness, of that expectation.

CONFERENCE XVII.

A DEFENCE OF THE SUBJECTIVE METHOD, WITH A REPLY.

Septuagesima Sunday, 6 February, 1898.

THE 'subjective method' is patronised by too many able men to allow us to suppose that nothing can be said for it. I have before me a very specious line of defence, which I may be permitted to draw out as follows.

A LETTER FROM EDWARD GIBBON JUNIOR.

January 1, 1898.

Sir,—I feel amused rather than otherwise impressed by the vehement attack which you have seen fit to make on "the subjective method," as you style it. That method is, as you should know, the master-key of knowledge, discovered by my venerable friend M. Auguste Comte. However, as you have afforded me some amusement, I am ready to furnish you in return with some justification of what you so ignorantly attack.

You are fond of enlarging on the impossibility of men generally arguing out their theological beliefs on intrinsic grounds. Scientific theology, you say, is too difficult for ordinary minds; men must, therefore, have recourse to some Divine Teacher, in

fact to the Catholic Church, and take her word about the things of God. I am happy to agree with you about this incapacity of ordinary mortals for making their own theology. They must go to school somewhere. But where? To the *Zeitgeist*, I say, to the spirit of the times. They must find out what is thought by the best thinkers of their time, by the πεπαιδευμένοι, and they must hold by that, and make their act of faith in that, not as in something eternally true, but as the best truth to be had for the time. I make of the educated opinion of the day what you make of the Church. Educated Opinion, that is my Church. My Church, unlike yours, is not infallible, but it points to the nearest approach to truth yet made. Some centuries ago, Educated Opinion coincided with the Catholic Church. I should have been a Catholic myself in those days: it was the best thing then to be done. Now Educated Opinion has left the Catholic Church far behind.

Human testimony is set down in your philosophy books as one of the avenues to truth. What you nickname "the subjective method," is nothing more than an acceptance of human testimony, the testimony of the most capable members of the race. It is faith in Humanity. As Humanity is a finite and fallible being, our faith in Humanity is not absolute, like your faith in God. Our Creed, unlike yours, is progressive, not fixed. We acknowledge it to contain crudities, blurred truths, if you like, even errors: but these errors are the best approximations of mankind to truth so far, and the hour has not yet

struck for going back upon them or recanting them.

We are not such fools as to deny objective truth in religion any more than in astronomy; propositions about God, as propositions about the stars, must be either true and according to fact, or false and away from fact; what we do deny is that humanity hitherto has obtained anything further than a tentative hold upon objective religious truth: therefore all our religious assents remain, for the present, provisional. Possibly they will never get any further. Mankind may have finally to acquiesce in the old saying, *ἐν βυθῷ ἡ αλήθεια*: religion is an abyss too deep for the human mind to fathom.

I am, sir, &c.,

E. G. J.

The following is my reply.

TO EDWARD GIBBON JUNIOR.

February 6, 1898.

Sir,—I too set great store by educated opinion and human testimony. When to be educated and to hold a particular opinion come to one and the same thing, that opinion, though not necessarily true, yet is almost irresistible for the time being: *e.g.*, the opinion that the Epistles of Phalaris are spurious, or that the divine right of kings, as held by James I., is an exaggeration, or that old St. Paul's was destroyed by fire in 1666. Where the testimony of competent judges, or competent witnesses, lies all one way, it can hardly be false.

But where educated men are of different opinions, or testimonies contradict one another, *e.g.*, as to the absolute unlawfulness of mental reservation, or the guilt of Mary Queen of Scots, we cannot rest simply on authority: we must balance the conflicting authorities, or test the case on its own merits for ourselves. Now Educated Opinion is very far from pointing, as you assume, all one way in the things of religion. There are plenty of educated men still believers in some form of dogmatic Christianity. It will be said that they are prejudiced and committed to dogmatism. But is there no prejudice against dogma? no preconceived and blindly maintained resolution that, whoever else is right, the upholders of any divine revelation must be wrong?

Then again, Educated Opinion, to have any value, must be the opinion of men educated in the particular matter in dispute. The opinion of the Professor of Greek is of no value in a council of war, and may not be worth much in theology. To claim our respect, Educated Opinion on matters of religion should be the opinion of men who are Doctors of Theology, or some approach thereto. Biology is not theology; even biblical erudition is not theology. In point of fact, there is comparatively little theology outside the Christian pale. The *Zeitgeist* must not be taken in preference to the opinion of experts in navigation, in war, in finance: why in religion?

If we wish to gather human testimony concerning religion, there is one great witness bearing such testimony which we must not neglect: I mean the Catholic Church. I say *human testimony*, because

the Church, like her Founder, is human no less than divine. I am considering the human credibility, which attaches to her as to any other teaching body in the world. Suppose Socrates re-appearing on earth, with his mind not advanced beyond the knowledge that he had of things that morning when he toyed with Phædo's hair, and advised him not to cut it short in sorrow for his dead master. Socrates goes about questioning in his old fashion—I hope it would be taken better in London than at Athens; he discovers Agnosticism in high places, but a good deal of religious belief there too; and ere long he makes the discovery of the Catholic Church. Six months have elapsed; the hemlock, let us assume, has not been pounded for him again, nor have the doors of a lunatic asylum closed upon him; the enquiring old man is called upon to conform to the religious views (*ἐννοίας*) of the Educated Mind at the end of the nineteenth century. *ποίας ἐννοίας, ὦ τᾶν;* might be the beginning of the philosopher's reply. 'What views, my dear sir? Everywhere I find contradiction and doubt on religious matters, except among one body of men. Do you ask me to conform to the views of the Roman Catholic Church?'

I am glad to see in your letter a departure from the subjective method pure and simple. You press the educated opinion of the day upon our acceptance, not as though its merit and commendation consisted precisely in its being current and fashionable, but because educated men are the most trustworthy witnesses to fact. You admit that

affirmations and denials in the matter of religion must be either in agreement or disagreement with things as they really and objectively are: consequently, that the true value of any such affirmation or denial is its consonance with objective fact.

Now, sir, Educated Opinion once held clear, definite views as to the future of the human soul after death, views which are still clung to by a multitude of educated men. It would be well to specify exactly what ground your Educated Opinion has discovered for departing from these views. It would be well to make sure, amid the uncertainty of all things else, whether that departure be quite safe; whether possibly there be not some one position in religion which we shall all be glad (after death) to have held in preference to other positions —or are we practically certain that death means for our consciousness final extinction and blank nothingness? The objective fact which answers to this enquiry, whichever way it lies, is a fact of the first magnitude, the basis, indeed, of all human deliberation about the higher ends of life. I cannot but think that you are treating this enquiry with too careless a hand.

I am, sir, &c.

To this correspondence I would add a few notes, which I number for clearness' sake.

1. The world, to be sure, has erected itself into a sort of Church, built not on a rock, but on a floating sand. This World-Church is highly

pontifical, and launches anathemas freely. It has excommunicated the Pope and his adherents. It teaches an exclusive doctrine of Educated Opinion, vindicating to itself the entire possession of that quality. Edward Gibbon Junior is wrong, however, in saying that his Church is not infallible: it does teach infallibly "the best truth to be had for the time," "the nearest approach to truth yet made." Such are the pretensions of this strange Church. But they are challenged by a powerful rival, and repudiated by millions of mankind. Therefore the voice of the World-Church cannot be taken for the voice of all Humanity, nor faith in her for faith in Humanity.

Neither, of course, can the Catholic Church speak with the voice of all Humanity. There is nothing more distressing to the faith of Catholics than the array of human intellect hostile to Catholicism. It is not the wealth of our adversaries and their splendid foundations that grieves us, but their mind, ability, and genius. This makes a difficulty, but not a doubt; for we question not that God has the solution with Himself. According to tradition, *a third part*, evidently some large portion, of the angelic intellects fell (Apoc. xii. 4). Still the Devil does not represent the Angels, nor does the World represent Humanity.

2. "Educated Opinion," as it calls itself, used to be certain about some, even many, of the things of God: now it is uncertain of all. It even doubts whether there be a Personal God, and is strongly inclined to think not. Still it cannot pretend

that the theories of Pantheism, in which it has taken refuge, are more intelligible, more credible, and hang together better than the old scholastic theology. It cannot deny that those theories, if one will follow them out unflinchingly, make havoc of all truth, even of the clearest convictions of the human mind; that they extend the saying, *truth is lost in the depths*, over the province of theology and also of philosophy, over the axioms of mathematics and the higher reaches of physical science; leaving us only the conclusions of what Carlyle called "pig philosophy," of which he gives the instance, "ginger is hot." In the realm of thought this Pantheism is a universal solvent.

3. By 'a Personal God' I mean One of whom we may in some true sense predicate thought and will and consciousness of self—a Being who can know and love us, and be angry with us when we do wrong—a Being who is not unsusceptible, as all unconscious and impersonal being is unsusceptible, of the sweet appellation *Our Father*.[1] This conception is scornfully termed 'anthropomorphic.' It would be just as effectual to call it 'hyperanaeschyntic' or 'pachydermatous.' It would equally well serve the purpose of confounding the minds of the simple with a very little Greek. A Personal God is a Being 'in the form of man,' not on the animal side of man's nature, as though God, as God, had hands and feet, but on his spiritual and mental

[1] See Newman, *Grammar of Assent*, ch. v. § 1, Belief in one God.

side. God is like man, and man is like God, this likeness being, as the catechism teaches, "not in my body, but in my soul," as "my soul is a spirit, has understanding and free will, and is immortal." A Supreme Being, presiding over and distinct from the world, must be more like man, the highest creature of which we have experience, than like any other object in the world; and He must resemble man, not in the inferior part of man's nature, which he has in common with other animals, but in the attributes of mind and soul, which make man man. At the same time the Supreme Being must possess those attributes in an ineffably higher order. With this explanation, there is nothing irrational in calling our conception of God 'anthropomorphic,' though to be sure that is not a usual term of Christian theology.

4. A Personal God is likely to keep an eye on man, to have a purpose and a mind about man, which He is able and ready to reveal; and *not* to have *left Himself without witness* (Acts xiv. 17).

5. Edward Gibbon Junior ignores the Incarnation and the revelation made in Christ. He throws us back upon habits of thought purely pagan and pre-Christian. Such thought animated Celsus against Origen; and Lucian and the Epicureans against the austere holiness of the Catacombs. Christianity was preached in the teeth of the educated opinion of the day, and triumphed over that opinion. Our Lord Himself was taunted with His opposition to Educated Opinion: *Hath any one of the rulers believed in him, or the Pharisees? but this crowd that knoweth*

not the law, &c. (John viii. 48, 49). There is nothing new in the Letter. It has but the merit of an accurate statement of the eternal contradiction between the world and Christ (John xvii. 14, seq.).

CONFERENCE XVIII.

FOUR LONDON PROFESSORS.

Sexagesima Sunday, 13 February, 1898.

A GREAT many people, to judge by their words and conduct, drift through life without ever making up their minds on religious subjects at all. Of those who have their minds made up about religion there are two great classes. One class has satisfied itself that God has spoken, has revealed something, which we are bound to believe simply on His word. The other class rests in the conviction that no spoken word has travelled from Heaven to earth, that there is no divine revelation, nothing for man to believe because God has said it. One class holds to faith in the theological sense of that term, as an assent without doubting to the word of God, simply because it is the word of God: the other rejects faith. It would be a great point gained, if we could persuade this latter class that there is nothing intrinsically absurd in the position of the former. We might address them thus, begging them to reflect on what we say:—

'You assume that God has not spoken, in which case faith is of course an absurd trammelling of the intellect. But try to realise in thought your adversaries' position. Their position all rests on this, that God has spoken. Supposing that God has

spoken, surely it is not absurd to defer to His word above every allegation of human reason. The question for you to examine is whether God has spoken or not. If He has not, then faith falls, not because it is not reasonably built upon its primary foundation, but because that foundation itself has given way. But if God has spoken, then the folly and absurdity and presumption and madness is all carried over to the other account.'

I propose to follow out this subject by the aid of what St. Ignatius calls "a composition of place." You will have heard of the proposal to rebuild Westminster in magnificence, that quarter of it which is much the reverse of magnificent now, along the river from the Victoria Tower to Vauxhall Bridge Road. Some one has further proposed to make this the site of the new London University, a real University of the American type, costing millions.[1] Suppose all this magnificent proposal realised. The new University smiles in her grandeur, her ample halls looking across the river in proud companionship with the Houses of Parliament. Oxford trembles for herself. Happily your degree there has been taken long ago. In one of these halls I discover a long suite of rooms tenanted by various Professors. Their names are over their doors: they remind us of the names of the members of the Barebones Parliament. Here they are: Mr. No-Suspension - of - Critical - Faculties, Mr. Independent Enquiry, Mr. Honest Research, Mr. Honest Error

[1] Written before the University had made a prize of that derelict, the Imperial Institute (1899).

(son of the preceding), Mr. Rising-above-Dogmatic-Systems, Mr. Sufferings-of-Suspended-Judgment (this man is a martyr), Mr. Necessary Doubts,—all friends and admirers of Edward Gibbon Junior. We will call upon these seven London Professors in their rooms one after another. To do them justice, they are all able men, any one of them being capable of holding us in argument a whole day. Our brief interview with each must leave much unsaid. We shall find in four of them occupation enough for one morning.

I. We enter then the rooms of the formidable Mr. No-Suspension-of-Critical-Faculties. Avoiding personalities as to his appearance and manner, we attend to what he endeavours to teach us. He is loud in his complaints against Faith. In any rational being, he says, the critical faculties are paramount: it is the supreme duty of that being and his inalienable privilege to judge for himself in all things. With due Socratic courtesy we venture to point out to the Professor that, like others of his tribe, he regards human nature rather in the ideal than in the actual. In actual life men are continually called upon for a suspension of their critical faculties. The young oarsman is rowing admirably in his own judgment, till his 'coach' stops the boat in the middle of the stream: then he listens patiently to quite a different view of himself, which he must fall in with, if he wishes to go on rowing in that boat. The critical faculties of the taught are suspended in favour of the teacher, those of the layman in favour of the expert, of the client in

favour of the lawyer, of the patient in favour of the physician, of the traveller in favour of the guide, of the subordinate in favour of the commanding officer. 'Myself I should have thought otherwise, but you know best.' Faith is only calling upon us to do fully and unreservedly for God what we are constantly doing, with more or less fulness, for our fellow-man. It is a good man's attribute to be teachable; and it is written of good Christians: *they shall be all taught of God* (John vi. 45). A man is unteachable, who will never waive his own judgment in deference to his teacher's. It is only ideal critical faculties that never need suspending: such ideal faculties would belong to an omniscient mind.

It is peculiarly in the conduct of delicate and dangerous operations that the critical faculties of the inferior have to be suspended for those of the superior: now, to a Christian, the salvation of his soul is an operation most dangerous and most delicate,—no airy speculation, no mental gymnastic, but a work of sober earnest and terribly practical: on this dangerous ground he *walks by faith, not by sight* (2 Cor. v. 7).

Lastly, our critical faculties are most willingly suspended and most justly, when the Guide whom we follow, the Teacher on whom we rely, is one whom we have every reason to venerate and love.

II. The next door is that of Mr. Independent Enquiry. He complains that there was no place for him in medieval Europe, where the Catholic Faith was dominant. This gentleman seems to be suffering from some mental malady. At least, there

is a strange confusion in his thought between 'no place' and 'place everywhere,' as though a traveller were to complain that he could find no lodging, because every door in the town was not open to him. Enquiry passes away into ascertained truth, as protoplasm into 'formed material.' As truth is ascertained, enquiry is closed: but it is only closed on one point, to open on three others.

No independent enquiry in the Middle Ages! True to this extent, that in matters whereon God has given a revelation to the world there was not then, and there never is in the Catholic Church, any enquiry set on foot and pursued and concluded in utter disregard of divine revelation. If *God, who in many divers ways of old spoke to our fathers by the prophets, hath in these our days spoken to us by his Son* (Heb. i. 1, 2), shall we not check all our enquiries by that divine word, and take that word for a supreme test of truth, in all the subjects to which it extends? I say, 'in all the subjects to which it extends,' because there are boundless regions of thought not covered by divine revelation, notably, the whole region of physical science, and the greater part of the region of mental philosophy, and of politics, and much of ethics, and even of theology itself. On many points of mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, and other sciences, enquiry has been terminated, not by divine revelation but by scientific proof. These established facts are starting-points for further enquiries. The more is known, the more there is to enquire. There is much work in reconciling and coordinating one known point with

another. Out of enquiry grows knowledge. What becomes the domain of knowledge ceases to be the domain of enquiry: but from that assured territory enquiry starts to break new ground further on. In a science such as astronomy now is, it would be absurd enquiring as though nothing were already known. It would be absurd to make enquiry 'independent' of previous knowledge. Every astronomer begins with assimilating the knowledge gained for him by his predecessors. Within that region he is not an enquirer but a disciple: he is taught, he does not discover. At the same time he repeats observations, and works out calculations, which have convinced astronomers before him, and is himself convinced by them in turn. If he will not be convinced, if he propounds a new astronomy, and will have it that accepted views are all wrong, we presume him to be a fool. If he is not a fool, and is content to learn astronomy as an existent, and therefore to some extent a traditional science, he holds its conclusions as well on the word of the great men who have taught them, as also partly on his own observations and reasonings. He is not fettered but helped by those conclusions. They make standing-ground under his feet. Thence he advances in his enquiries, and, may be, arrives at determining new truths, not known to mankind before.

I am not concerned with vindicating the intellectual character of the Middle Ages: but this I say,—it is not the fault of the Catholic Church, as guardian of divine revelation, if her children in

any age are not intellectual. There is abundant hunting-ground for their intellects to range over, quite as much for them as for any other human intellect,—first, because the greater portion of the field of speculation is untouched by any revelation; secondly, because where we are in possession of revealed truth, the position so secured becomes a vantage ground for new enquiries. Though the knowledge of faith is not the knowledge of science, it is no less certain, or even more certain; and from it, as from the knowledge of science, we proceed to further knowledge, which is truly scientific, but would have been unattainable without the premises that are assured to us by faith. Thus is constructed the science of Catholic dogmatic theology, full of controversies and enquiries, free ground within the ample containing walls of revelation. More than that, the Catholic enquirer turns back upon the premises that he holds as matter of faith, revealed by God. Them he endeavours to make his own by dint of reasoning also, as an astronomer may verify the observations of his predecessors, which he has hitherto taken on their word, and is still willing so to take. This department of theology is called *apologetic*, because it is useful for making an *apologia*, or defence, of theology, against unbelievers who will not take its fundamental facts on faith.

The first position debated in Apologetic Theology is the existence of God.[1] Arguments are given,

[1] So St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.* p. 1. q. 2. art. 3. *Utrum Deus sit.* And he begins, *Videtur quod Deus non sit, quia. . . . si Deus esset, nullum malum inveniretur.*

which on this point are conclusive. We cannot always find conclusive arguments. Objections are considered, and often met triumphantly. Sometimes, however, they cannot be refuted: all that can be done is to argue that they are indecisive. So far as reason goes, the matter in debate remains open; any certainty we can have there is the sole certainty of divine faith. Considering the magnitude of some of the questions, for instance, the question of the existence of evil, this is not to be wondered at. Intellectually, a believer comes as well off as an unbeliever in his efforts to deal with the mystery; and beyond that, his mind is tranquillised by faith.

III. Mr. Honest Research next admits us to his rooms. He admits rather than welcomes us, for this Professor is in a pouting mood. He is playing the Injured Man. The Catholic Church, he says, has no confidence in his aid for the solution of religious difficulties. We try to cheer him up, telling him that the Church has the fullest confidence in the aid which he can render to those outside her pale, believing that his guidance can but lead such persons to her or towards her: yet so that the research be truly honest; and honest it is not, unless it be in accordance with the subject-matter; and where the subject-matter is the truth of God, the research must be accompanied by prayer.

The following is a prayer which Cardinal Newman left behind him, and wished such honest searchers to say continually: "O my God, I confess that Thou canst enlighten my darkness. I confess that Thou alone canst. I wish my darkness to be

enlightened. I do not know whether Thou wilt: but that Thou canst and that I wish are sufficient reasons for me to ask, what Thou at least hast not forbidden my asking. I hereby promise that by Thy grace, which I am asking, I will embrace whatever I at length feel certain is the Truth, if ever I come to be certain. And by Thy grace I will guard against all self-deceit, which may lead me to take what nature would have rather than what reason approves." This is the petition of an honest enquirer, who combines enquiry with prayer. If we were seeking for a hidden spring of water, we might indeed pray to God for success in that as in any other undertaking: but there would be nothing impious or unnatural in not praying, but simply taking our measurements and using our boring-tools. But to look for God Himself without prayer, at least some such conditional prayer as that above given, is an unnatural and improper method of search, not calculated to attain success. It is a neglect of our Lord's own direction, who prefixes *Ask and it shall be given to you* before *Seek and you shall find* (Matt. vii. 7). Whoever in matters theological will merely philosophise and not pray—would approach God with head erect and telescope in hand, as though he were on a geographical survey, and not seeking acquaintance with his Maker—whoever has no mind to hearken and be docile, in case God should vouchsafe to teach, let not such a man dignify his theological vagaries with the name of 'honest research.'

The Church has confidence that no honest

research will ever end in proving the contradictory of any of her dogmas, as that Christ has not risen, that the Blessed Sacrament does not contain Christ, that Mary is not immaculate, that the soul is not immortal, that hell does not last for ever. And this her confidence she expects every one of her children to share. In this confidence a child of the Church must search into her dogmas, not as doubting of them, or recalling and suspending his assent the while, though he may doubt of the value of this or that argument alleged to support them, or of his own or any one else's competency wholly to clear away and dispel some particular difficulty. We hold an article of faith, not as a mere theorem, provable and proved, but as having God's word for it; and on the strength of that word we are bound to hold the dogma, without wavering for any difficulty. Such wavering in us, the faithful, would not be honest research, but apostasy; it would be a stepping down from and losing our hold of the truth of God, of which we are already in possession.

I quote from a letter of the late Mr. Hope-Scott, written before he was a Catholic, to Mr. Gladstone, August 2, 1838.[1]

"Let us suppose him exposed to the attacks of heretics—what course is he to take? Why, he is to 'try the spirits,' to 'prove all things' (1 Thess. v. 21; 1 John iv. 1). But what does this mean? Does it mean that he is at once to go into the whole question of his own creed, the creed he has

[1] Published in Ornsby's *Memoirs of Hope-Scott*, i. 156, 157.

sworn to, and under which he has had a (perhaps) long experience of good works? Surely not. This would be 'laying again the foundation' [Heb. vi. 1] and forgetting all his progress in Christ. What did the Apostle mean then? It seems, no more than this, viz., that the new teaching should be tried by the old doctrine which a man had always held: being supposed in the possession of a standard of truth which he was to 'hold fast,' when new doctrines arose he was to test them by it. St. John bids us 'try the spirits,' and in the last verse [1 John iv. 2] gives the Catholic confession of Christ's Incarnation as the test of the particular spirits he had to deal with. To a churchman rightly trained this example affords a general rule, and he avouches the ancient Catholic tradition in which he has been trained. . . . The doctrine not being there, he cannot 'receive the teacher into his house and bid him God speed' [2 John 10]; he knows him to be wrong, passes him by, and has done with him. . . . The baptised Christian is the retained advocate, the enlisted soldier of the faith; he knows but one view of the question in debate—but one side in the battle to be fought."

Thirteen years afterwards the writer became a Catholic, by the process here recommended, "that the new [Catholic] teaching should be compared with the old [Catholic] doctrine which a man had always held."

It does not seem to occur to many that the laying hold of truth and assenting to it, when found, and the retention of a discovered truth in spite of

contrary appearances, is quite as valuable an aid, and quite as necessary, to the possession of truth, as is the original search for it. No doubt, abuse is possible, the abuse of premature assent and subsequent obstinacy, whereby a man closes with a mere phantom and afterwards will not give it up. But *usum non tollit abusus:* a process does not cease to be legitimate by the fact of there being illegitimate counterfeits of it. This striking upon truth and holding fast to truth, harpooning it as it were, is valuable even in the conclusions of physical science. But it is especially valuable in the sphere of moral truth, in dealing with men and taking the word of men. If we will trust no one, we may as well retire from business. The true business man is he who discerns whom to trust, and does trust him. Occasionally even this man finds that his confidence has been misplaced, but as a rule it is not misplaced. In all philosophy we must go upon what happens as a rule, not what happens occasionally. This then is the nature of human faith, that, once formed, it sets the mind at rest. We make no more researches as doubting the veracity of him whose word we have taken. We should consider it disloyal to do so, and even a mark of fatuity. What would be thought of a War Office which sent a General into the field, and afterwards set spies upon him to report whether his despatches were or were not mere lies? We should say: 'If you can't believe that man's word, you should never have given him the command of your armies.' In like manner we say: 'Never be a Catholic, unless you mean to hold to your faith

absolutely:' 'Never take God's word, as delivered by the Church, unless you mean to take it once for all.'

No man would ever allow that God had spoken, and then contend that what God had said was not true. All who disbelieve God's word deny that God has spoken it. And the only faith possible anywhere is what may be translated into this syllogism:—'What God gives His word for must be true: but God has given His word for this article and for that: therefore these articles must be true.' Assent to that syllogism, and you renounce further questioning of those articles.

IV. Honest Error is the younger son of Honest Research. The elder son and heir, Ascertained Truth, unfortunately seems not yet to have entered into residence at the new University of London. This younger son (in a whisper be it spoken) is a good fellow enough, but somewhat of a simpleton. His name among the Schoolmen was Invincible Ignorance. He is however a wonderful 'coach,' and enjoys a well-earned reputation for getting dull men through their final examination in the Divinity School. We will just look in upon him, and I beg you mark his features: it is of the highest importance that you should never confound him with another personage who often trades under his name, but who really is no brother or relation of his, no child of Honest Research at all. This person's real name, which shows his parentage, is Dishonest Error: of him beware. I am happy to see him nowhere about at present: but report has it that he

often haunts these doors.[1] And now, having gazed at the broad, placid countenance of good Mr. Honest Error, and returned the greeting of his self-satisfied smile, we make our bow and depart.

[1] Further particulars of Dishonest Error may be found in my *Moral Philosophy* (Stonyhurst Series, Longmans), pp. 28, 136, 368.

CONFERENCE XIX.

THREE MORE LONDON PROFESSORS.

Quinquagesima Sunday, 20 February, 1898.

V. AGAIN we betake ourselves to Westminster, to complete our round of visits in the University of our imagination. We knock at the door of Mr. Rising-above-Dogmatic-Systems. We find a gentleman of the quantity of some six foot three in height, and of a proportionate habit of mind, as one who has outgrown the ordinary swathing-bands and integuments of matter and of thought. He talks fast and incoherently,' and we have difficulty in catching the wisdom wherewith each unfinished sentence is replete, as it glides by, rapidly supplanted by another. Such notes as we have been able to take may be exhibited thus: that dogma fetters the mind — that system cramps thought—that fixed beliefs pinion the wings of speculation—that any definite antecedent principle is a hinderance to the progress of philosophy—that if you are bound to believe anything, you are not free to reason about anything—that stagnation of thought is the doom of the Catholic inquirer, confined as he is to dogmatic systems and traditional teaching. We drop our note-book, for we are not disposed to turn it into a ' thesaurus of words and

phrases.' It strikes us that this Professor has but one string to his lyre, and works it hard. εἰδόσιν ἡμῖν λέγεις, we murmur in our sweetest Attic tones, not to offend the ears of so majestic a person. Were we on more familiar terms with him, we should suggest his procuring Cardinal Newman's *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, and Cardinal Franzelin's treatise, *De Traditione*, and vacating his chair till he had mastered the contents of those two works. The word 'development' is the key to the brief reply we have to make him. He has to learn that the dogmatic system of the Catholic Church is not what he takes it for, a dead timber-fence, but a living tree, putting out tendrils and leaves and fruit, 'old things and new,' in the sunshine of spiritual contemplation and theological discussion.

There are traditions and traditions in the Church, some sacred and perennial, others that pass away with altered circumstances or with increased experience. In the interpretation of Scripture we have learned many things since the days of St. Augustine and Origen. Moral Theology, as a science, is a comparatively recent formation; and there is much to do yet in the unfolding of ethical principles, and the application of ancient canons to the intricacies of modern life.

Even in Dogmatic Theology there is new ground to be mapped out and explored, stores of knowledge to be collected, unpacked, and sorted, about the Sacraments, about the Bible, about the Church. There is the ever widening field of Catholic Philosophy in relation with Science. To a man, who has

lived all his days as a Catholic student, it is amusing to hear of being 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' by Church authority. The only crib or cabin in which he feels straitened is his own physical frame, with the consequent limitations to his bodily and mental powers; and the only confinement is the brevity of human life.

VI. *Non passio sed causa facit martyrem*, says St. Augustine; not the mere suffering, but the cause makes the martyr. This sentence must give us pause in allowing the martyr's aureole to Mr. Sufferings-of-Suspended-Judgment. By his own statement he is a great sufferer, and he looks it. To use a comparison which Professor Huxley once employed of himself in the *Nineteenth Century*, he is like a man wandering through a wood, not knowing how he got into it, nor what he shall find when he passes out at the other side. An uncomfortable situation, when the wood is this world, and the far side of it the eternity beyond. So this Professor endures agonies of doubt and fear, he has his judgment suspended, he cannot make up his mind whether there is any truth in religion, any immortality, any soul, any free-will, any sin and hell, any Providence, any revelation. Furthermore, he canonises his own uncertainties, declares them virtuous, even heroic, and the tendency and design of his lectures is to lead others to become as uncertain as himself. This Professor should beware lest the text of the Prophet come to apply to him: *With lies ye have saddened the heart of the just man, whom I have not made sad* (Ezech. xiii. 22). God would not have the hearts of

His faithful, of the children of His own school, made sad with the sufferings of a suspended judgment. For them there is no virtue in such sufferings; they are not the agonies of Christian martyrs. The class of people to profit by them are they who, having lived unconsciously in an heretical communion, are now beginning to suspect their position, and the necessity to change it; they again who have hitherto firmly believed in this world, its riches, pleasures, and honours, as the supreme good of man, and now are waking up, like Felix of old (Acts xxiv. 25) to an uneasy apprehension of evil and of hell, and God the Judge. It is a rule laid down by St. Ignatius in his *Spiritual Exercises*, that when men are in a way of evil, the devil tries to keep them quiet and happy, and God's word troubles them: whereas *the God of hope fills with all joy and peace in believing* (Rom. xv. 13) such as do believe in Him, and endeavour to live up to their faith. It is to do the devil's work to breathe uncertainty and restlessness into such souls.

Even souls however who are better for coming to be tossed with doubts and unrestful with suspension of judgment, are not destined by Providence to remain in that as in their chronic condition. Their agitation resembles certain stages of transition in recovery from severe illness. The symptoms must be transitory, and pass off; otherwise they would augur a fatal issue; and so it is with doubts as to the existence or extent of divine revelation. *Deponendum dubium*—'the doubt must be laid aside,' is the ever repeated maxim of Catholic moralists. It is

laid aside by the certainty of divine faith supervening, confirming the Christian in the knowledge of all truth necessary for him to know, that he may please God, serve Him as God wills to be served, and save his own soul for eternity.

We dealt in some sort with this unhappy Professor and his sufferings in our Conferences of last year. Departing from his rooms, we leave on his table a copy of *Oxford Conferences*, 1897, with the leaves turned down at pp. 62, 63, 82, 83.

VII. Mr. Necessary Doubts receives us with a roar. He comes on you like an Homeric Ajax, or a moving boulder of Scotch granite. He is positive about everything negative, confident that no dogma can withstand the shock of his argumentation. If a man wants to go on believing any articles of faith, he says, let him keep out of the battle of mind with mind. Free exercise of intellect, he is sure, must shake any faith: the objections stare any intellectual man in the face, and they are insuperable. Whoever reasons freely, doubts. Intellectualism means scepticism.—What a full-blooded, self-satisfied man is Mr. Necessary Doubts!

In one way, all his sayings are mere truisms. Whoever exercises his intellect in speculation regardless of faith, comes to doubt about the things of faith. Faith is a check, a bridle upon intellect. St. Paul speaks of *bringing every intellect into captivity unto the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor. x. 5).

There is such a thing as the undisciplined exercise of the intellect, and this brings on doubts about faith. But doubts are not the necessary consequence

of every exercise of the intellect, even keen, vigorous, and healthy exercise. The Professor confounds together two very different things, a doubt about faith, and a difficulty against faith; as scrupulous people take a temptation against purity for a sin against purity. Difficulty and temptation are inevitable ordinarily: doubt and sin can be and are kept away. Catholic philosophers and theologians, hosts of them, young and old, teaching and taught, live in a world of difficulties and objections against their faith. It is their business to discern such difficulties, to propound them in the way of academic exercise, to solve them so far as they are able, and to wait in patient confidence for a solution that does not yet occur. The intellect cannot be exercised without encountering many difficulties against faith: but difficulties do not make doubts in the mind of the believer. As a Christian, he relies upon God's word above all things; as an intellectual man, he knows that truth on moral and religious subjects cannot appear, except under clouds of difficulties, to minds constituted like ours: if the revelation were not difficult, perplexing, mysterious, it could never be true.

But this Professor is peremptory. For all his talk of 'the battle of mind with mind,' he dislikes contradiction, and never in his life looked at anything except from his own end of the thing. We have done now with the new University of London.

CONFERENCE XX.

POPE CONSCIENCE.

First Sunday in Lent, 27 February, 1898.

THE one merit and justification of dogma is its truth. It may be consoling, it may edify and build up the social order, it may be a stepping-stone to speculation, it may soften the heart and stir it to sympathy with distress,—but the grand reason for believing any dogma is not any of these merits, except in so far as they can be turned to evidence that the dogma is in accordance with the objective order of facts, or with things in themselves as they really are. On the other hand, a dogma may be very terrible and disquieting to many: it may be a call to obedience of intellect rather than to speculation: it may be a warning against much that is called progress, and mark it as going by large strides away from the safe path: and yet it may be our best course to accept that dogma, simply because it is true.

The most important dogma of all for our time, and the most questioned, is the dogma that God requires dogmas: that, while making allowance for ignorance and prejudice as an excuse in this as in other obligations, say, that of civil allegiance, He yet will not admit to His eternal Kingdom, but will

condemn to eternal woe, men who have rejected dogmas fairly proposed to them, or who have remained grossly and culpably ignorant of such dogmas,—and that because, though they may have observed other points of morality, they have lived and died in one frightful sin and habitual violation of the natural law, the sin of pride and disobedience to their Creator, the sin of Lucifer, which made him of an angel a devil. This dogma, that God requires dogmas, lies at the root of Christianity, as we see it in the New Testament and in the history of the Catholic Church. It makes all the difference between Christianity and any philosophy. Christ is no mere reasoner, but Lord of the intellect. To be undogmatic is to be un-Christian.

Protestantism means No Popery; and that, logically followed out, means No Christianity. But the best abolition is a substitution. What shall we substitute for the Pope, for the dogmatic principle, for Christianity, for Church authority? Doubtless, some respectable figure. If the substitute be not itself respectable, let it get a false name, let it wear stolen clothes. There is no name more honourable than the name of Conscience, no presence more commanding. Let this wicked antichrist call itself Conscience: let it stand up, an inward authority against all outward authority: let it usurp the tiara: open the doors of the Vatican for the new Pontiff to come forth: Pope Conscience is crowned.

I find two manifestoes of the policy of the new reign. However contradictory, I faithfully reproduce both, as one calendaring State Papers. The

first manifesto is drawn by E. G. J., and runs as follows.

"The practical dethronement of the Pope [Leo, Pius, etc., up to Peter and Him who gave the keys to Peter] has followed the doctrine, that the only proper realm of religion is the conscience of the individual man.[1] Protestant Rationalism makes the moral faculty of man the measure and arbiter of faith. Its central conception is the elevation of conscience into a position of supreme authority as the religious organ, a verifying faculty discriminating between truth and error. It regards Christianity as designed to preside over the moral progress of mankind, as a conception which was to become more and more sublimated and spiritualised as the human mind passed into new phases, and was able to bear the splendour of a more unclouded light. In its eyes the moral element of Christianity is as the sun in heaven, and dogmatic systems as the clouds that intercept and temper the brightness of its ray."

The other manifesto is from the pen of a Roman Cardinal.

"When men advocate the rights of conscience, they in no sense mean the rights of the Creator, nor the duty to Him, in thought and deed, of the creature, but the right of thinking, speaking, writing, and acting, according to their judgment or their humour, without any thought of God at all. They do not even pretend to go by any moral rule, but

[1] This sentence appeared in a leader in *The Times*, in the autumn of 1879.

they demand, what they think is an Englishman's prerogative, for each to be his own master in all things, and to profess what he pleases, asking no one's leave, and accounting priest or preacher, speaker or writer, unutterably impertinent who dares to say a word against his going to perdition, if he likes it, in his own way. Conscience has rights because it has duties; but in this age, with a large portion of the public, it is the very right and freedom of conscience to dispense with conscience, to ignore a Lawgiver and Judge, to be independent of unseen obligations. It becomes a license to take up any or no religion, to take up this or that, and let it go again, to go to church, to go to chapel, to boast of being above all religions, and to be an impartial critic of each of them. Conscience is a stern monitor, but in this century it has been superseded by a counterfeit, which the eighteen centuries prior to it never heard of, and could not have mistaken for it, if they had. It is the right of self-will."[1]

This second manifesto is of one of those masterpieces, of which Aristotle says, "nothing can be added to it, nothing taken from it."

Against the first manifesto I have a protest to enter: the psychology is at fault. Conscience is made a distinct faculty of the mind: whereas upon St. Thomas's showing (*Sum. Theol.* 1a, q. 79, artt. 11—13), conscience is not a distinct faculty, but is merely the intellect working upon a certain order of practical ideas. It is the judgment of the mind

[1] Newman, *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, § 5, p. 250.

upon the course of life taken or to be taken. To say then that "the moral faculty" is "the measure and arbiter of faith," is to say no more than that faith must be measured by human understanding, a saying not very new, not remarkably profound, and not exactly Scriptural. Indeed it is a resuscitation of what Protagoras taught at Athens, and Plato contradicted, *πάντων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος*, "man is the measure of all things,"—in other words, "there is no superhuman Mind." "The elevation of conscience into a supreme authority" is simply the elevation of the human intellect into that position, in spite of St. Paul's *leading every understanding captive to the obedience of faith* (2 Cor. x. 5). It appears we have got an infallible Mentor at home, not His Grace at Lambeth,—the Archbishop of Canterbury is no more needed than the Roman Bishop: the seat and see of infallibility is in the heart of every man, where Conscience dwells. And as Conscience after all is only a human faculty, and what that faculty does the man is rightly said to do, according to Aristotle, it follows that every man is his own infallible Pope. This is the Protestant principle of Individualism carried to the utmost: it supersedes Pope, Church, and Bible. It comes to this, that whatever any man thinks in religion and morality is true for him, though not of course for his neighbours, who all think differently.

Conscience however is not infallible, nor the individual man. Conscience needs educating, as he does. There is greater need of education of the

conscience than of any other intellectual formation. Man has to learn his duties as he learns the principles of health, the laws of mechanics, the theorems of geometry, the conditions of safety in coach-building, or any other art or science. And he is just as likely to go wrong, and has gone wrong as grievously, in his judgments on moral matters as on any other subject of human knowledge. The peculiarity of conscience is that man is bound to get himself educated in that department. He is bound to learn his duties as man, what is right and what is wrong. He is not bound to learn other arts and sciences. Another peculiarity is that if, having done what in him lay to get his conscience educated aright, his conscience after all is in error, he does right in following that erroneous conscience,—nay, he is bound to follow it. So St. Thomas, *Summa*, 1a 2æ, q. 19, artt. 5, 6 (*Aquinas Ethicus*, I. 67—72). I quote some of his words:—"If therefore reason or conscience errs with an error that is voluntary, either directly, or indirectly through negligence, being an error touching that which one is bound to know, then such an error of reason or conscience does not excuse a man, and a will in agreement with a reason or conscience so erring is evil. But if it be such an error as to make the act involuntary; if it be ignorance of some circumstance, an ignorance not due to negligence; that error of reason or conscience excuses a man, and a will in accordance with such an erroneous reason is not evil." St. Thomas is far enough from proclaiming the individual conscience infallible,

omniscient, and self-sufficient, either for duties of this world, or for duties towards God and religion.

Conscience again is not Pope, for it is not an external authority, and the Pope is an external authority, like the Commander-in-chief. Or we may compare the Pope and the Pastors of the Church under him to the signal-men on a railway. Their presence and the signals that they display by no means dispense with the quality of eyesight in the driver of a train: on the contrary, they appeal precisely to that quality, and (omitting fog-signals) could do nothing with a blind driver. So the Pope appeals to the consciences of Catholics. His guidance is rejected by the unconscientious among them. It is part of the conscientious care of Catholics, believing as they do that their pastors are set by God for their guidance on the way to heaven, to accommodate thought and action to this guidance: no other behaviour do they consider safe or right. They run by their signals, as do the drivers on the railway. They may wonder at a particular signal being up, see no reason for it and sundry reasons against it, feel the inconvenience and annoyance of being thus checked in their course: but they know it is never safe to disobey the signal, and they do obey it accordingly. This is not a putting out of eyes, or an abandonment of conscience, it is having one's eyes and one's conscience guided,—guidance most necessary in the conflicting ways of life; guidance afforded by God, who is the author of those ways, and knows them as we never can.

The ideal conscience points to right and wrong as the ideal compass points due north and south. But there are variations of the compass, and there are variations of conscience. These were never better illustrated than at the era of the Reformation in England. On the one hand there was the conscience of such men as Blessed John Fisher and Blessed Thomas More, a truly ideal conscience, enlightened by long study of theology, confirmed by the authority of the Church, and borne out by the grace of God to martyrdom. Then there was King Henry VIII., a Titanic prototype of Baillie Jarvie, croaking all Europe over, 'ma cōnscience.' The Universities were assailed with arguments and bribes, the Pope with threats by no means empty, the Church of England was disturbed and subverted, because the King's "conscience was torn," and he was "tortured day and night with the thought"[1] that the present Queen was not his lawful wife,—all this, as his subjects well knew, and as one of them bluntly declared, "not upon conscience only, and for avoiding God's displeasure, but rather to satisfy and serve his bodily pleasures and appetite" in the company of Mistress Anne Boleyn.[2]

Not altogether without parentage in the "conscience" of Henry Tudor are the modern varieties of conscience in England. Besides the old Catholic conscience, still clinging to the full measure of the doctrine of Christ, and to the papal chair where

[1] Wilkins, *Concilia*, III. 714.

[2] Harpsfield, *Pretended Divorce*, p. 258, who refers to Ezech. xiv 3—10. I am indebted to Father Bridgett for these citations.

sits the exponent of that doctrine, we find the Anglican conscience, holding to a diminished measure indeed, but still to many dogmas of Christianity,—the Non-Conformist conscience, with fewer dogmas, indeed sometimes going little beyond Deism—and the Agnostic conscience, holding to morality stripped of dogma. In the objective order —and no thinker is honest who resolutely averts his eyes from the objective order—one at most of these four consciences can be right: three of them certainly must be wrong. This the adherents of 'Pope Conscience' willingly allow: and the concession is 'saddled with a rider,' sometimes a whispered secret, sometimes a loud assertion, that the fourth, the Agnostic conscience is really in the right; that the dogmas of Christianity are "the clouds," morality "the sun," and that it is high time for the clouds to be scattered, and unveiled sunlight to shine upon the earth.

To this elegant metaphor, and the assumption which it covers, we will address ourselves in the next Conference.

CONFERENCE XXI.

UNDOGMATIC MORALITY.

Second Sunday in Lent, 6 March, 1898.

Is the final perfection of Christianity to appear in a race of undogmatic Christians, whose pure and upright and beneficent lives will put to shame the apostles who preached the faith, and the martyrs who died for it? First, as I have already observed, an undogmatic Christian is no Christian at all. The Gospel yields no standing-ground for such a creature. Call him a moral man, if you will, but Christian he is not. Accurately stated, the question is this, whether Christianity should finally give place to a naked, undogmatic morality.

And there are not wanting arguments in favour of this consummation. Whatever be thought of dogma, Christian and Rationalist are agreed that morality is an indispensable element in the making of a good man. Also that a dogmatic faith does not ensure moral goodness. History and experience are full of examples of faith conjoined with wickedness. Faith and works are often separated. The Christian preacher assumes the former, and urges his audience to bear it out by the latter. Conversely, there are men in whom no flaw of immorality can be detected, in the usual sense of that word,

or of dishonesty, or of any other vice, save only of irreligion—and that they take for no vice, so long as they do not outrage and insult their neighbours' convictions in the matter—admirable men for all purposes of this world: men whose many virtues are set in strong relief by the contrary vices that prevail and have prevailed among thousands of the Christian faithful. Would it not be well, if the world were filled with such men? if Christianity could vanish like a falling star, and leave them in the place where it has appeared, its noblest outcome and more than ample substitute?

To this question we have an answer in the words of the Founder of Christianity: *What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?* (Matt. xvi. 26). Men of this type may be the cement of human society, the pioneers of thought, the wideners of commerce and of empire, but it remains a serious question for them at the end, how God will take their ignoring of Him. 'I follow my conscience,' they may plead. But that plea leads to the further enquiry: 'Was not your conscience warped and distorted through your own fault, a false conscience of your own creation, and therefore no excuse?' In flying from dogma, we have fallen into the jaws of a deep dogmatic question: 'Will God, the Judge of all men, be content with morality without dogma?' Answer that He will be content, or even that there is no God, the Judge of all, and you set up a dogma—a dogma, if you like, with a *minus* sign prefixed, but still a dogma: answer that you do not know, and you

allow that morality without dogma is a dangerous venture.

But without anticipating the judgment to come, let us examine undogmatic morality, and test its completeness and sufficiency in the ethical order, according to the enumeration of moral virtues. We leave out Faith, Hope, and Charity, because they are not moral but theological. There remains the virtue of Religion, a department of Justice, concerned with the worship of God. This virtue lies all in ruins, for want of foundation in any definite knowledge of the Object of worship, whether He exists or not, whether He be a Personal Being, whether He has anything to do with men,—all these being points of dogma. "Worship, mostly of the silent sort, at the altar of the Unknowable and the Unknown"—Professor Tyndall's felicitous description of undogmatic adoration—is a mere ruin of the virtue of Religion, and "cosmic emotion" is no better.

The cardinal virtue of Temperance, in its most important branch, Purity, has had much support in the past from dogma. And it must be acknowledged that the support was badly needed. No one can know anything of Greek life, especially in its later development, the Græco-Roman life, and not know that it was the teaching of dogmas in support of morality, and especially the dogmas of God made Man, of the Virgin Mother of God, of the Resurrection, of judgment to come (Acts xxiv. 25), of the Holy Eucharist, that raised up the civilisation in which the gospel was first

preached from an almost unfathomable depth of impurity. It is far from certain, to speak mildly, that love of virtue for its own sake has taken such hold of our generation as to afford promise of purity subsisting amid the wreck of dogma. Rather it is part of that wreck, that the law and very theory of purity decays with the decay of dogma. Undogmatic moralists have ceased to recognize the truth that purity covers the whole man, in his individual as well as in his social aspect, in thought and word and private action no less than in his public conduct. Along with the disregard of Sacraments and neglect of Confession goes the disregarding of Christ's rule, *every one who looketh upon a woman to desire her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart* (Matt. v. 28). In the way of purity, morality without dogma goes little beyond mere external conventionality and adaptation of oneself to the exigencies of social life. *Cohibet manum non cor.* It *makes clean the outside of the cup and platter* (Matt. xxiii. 25).

Again, if we look at the commercial morality of our time, as it obtains in the practice of men who take no thought of God or of the articles of any creed, we are apt to think that 'honest doubt' carries in its wake much doubtful honesty. I am not speaking merely of the practice of these men: they differ from the men of the Middle Ages in this, their very theory of Justice has gone wrong, and they justify to themselves their unjust gains.

I conclude that though morality does not in philosophic sequence depend upon dogma,—except

upon the one dogma of the existence of a Supreme Being, Lawgiver, and Judge,[1]—yet the practical result of the abolition of dogma is a decay in the theory of morals. Fictitious sins are created, and real sins are wiped off the roll. As one of the advocates of undogmatic morality puts it: "The standard of excellence being rectified by the measure of utility, a crowd of imaginary virtues and vices pass silently away." Virtues dear to Christian saints, and vices which Christ will judge! It is not any Christian morality, clearly, that will survive the wreck of Christian dogma.

I will sum up in a series of numbered propositions.

1. Belief in dogma does not necessarily carry with it the exercise of the moral virtues.

2. There may be considerable exercise of the moral virtues without any belief in dogma.—This proposition is rather true of individual men than of mankind as a whole. And of these men we must bear in mind what Newman said of a school of thought, whose teaching he considered was making against dogma: "Such men are to be judged in their disciples." It is not enough to point to the innocent and blameless life of the master: is innocence borne out or confounded by following the lead of his thought?

3. Belief in dogma is a help to the exercise of the moral virtues.—There is no practising Catholic who will tell you otherwise. The proposition rests on common experience.

[1] *Moral Philosophy*, Stonyhurst Series, pp. 123—125, n. 13.

4. When from belief in dogma a man passes into unbelief, there is reason to fear, first, that his morals have suffered before the change; secondly, that they will suffer after it and in consequence of it. The change often means the upheaval and subversion of the whole moral nature.—I speak of a fear, not of a certainty. I have in view, not a universal affirmative in the strict logical sense, but one of those generalisations, true in great measure, with which we must rest satisfied in philosophising upon the behaviour of men. Thus one class of apostate priests have won for themselves an evil reputation in other matters besides their apostasy.[1]

5. Dogma without morality is not enough for eternal salvation. So the Catholic Church rules, which alone is any authority on that subject.

6. Morality without dogma is not enough for eternal salvation. So again the Catholic Church teaches.—It means that a man will be damned, who rejects dogma, not in mere ignorance, nor in blind and inculpable prejudice, but in pride and wilfulness.

7. Where it can be secured, and so far as it can be secured, morality without dogma is enough for the purposes of this world.—There is indeed some difficulty in making people socially virtuous, who have not a shred of religious belief. In dealing with large masses of men, the difficulty becomes

[1] See a series of Articles by the Rev. Herbert Thurston in *The Month* for 1897, *Weeds from the Pope's Garden*, and *Two Centuries of 'Verts*. I admit the existence of a class of ex-priests who have led respectable lives.

considerable. Rich people without faith run into frivolity, licentiousness, and thoughtless cruelty. The poor without faith rebel against what they consider an unjust social order. Still, as a man is warm who has food and clothes, fire and shelter, even without money to pay for them, while he has them; so too will social virtues, even without faith and religion, suffice for civilisation, comfort, and temporal prosperity, while they last.

8. Undogmatic morality and the workings of undogmatic thought cannot be fairly studied in a society where Christianity still has influence. If we wish to see undogmatic morality in full bloom, and in the lustre of its own intrinsic merits, we must observe it in a thoroughly pagan land, where no one has any beliefs in God or in the life to come, except negations.—The reason is, because persons who have no faith keep up a rivalry with those who have faith, and are unwilling to be outdone by them in external morality at least. The public conscience, or the standard of morality held of obligation in a particular society, is kept high where Christian views prevail. Rationalists, like other men, are slow to defy public opinion, and are influenced by the opinions of their neighbours, even while disavowing the ultimate grounds of such opinions. Thus, in a country where there is much Christianity, the teaching of the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew must put some check on the liberty of divorce. Marriage relations will be different from what they are amongst us at present, once England becomes thoroughly secularised and rationalistic.

A word in conclusion on an historical contrast which may be urged in favour of creedless morality and against dogmatism. It is the contrast of modern with mediæval Oxford, the former ruled by the Church and Dogma, the latter by Society and Conscience; the former, as historians picture it, full of "anger, hatred, and all ill-will," resulting not unfrequently in violence and blood-shed, the latter a home of social amenities. It seems at first sight as though both the one and the other of our national Universities afforded us an object-lesson of the superiority of undogmatic morality over conduct guided by dogma. But these arguments from history have to be received with extreme caution. They are beset with the fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc,* or *non causa pro causa.* It will hardly be seriously maintained that medieval Oxford broke heads in the High Street because it believed in transubstantiation, or that a partiality for the Higher Criticism is conducive to sobriety and courtesy. It might almost as well be argued that the improvement was due to the opening of the Great Western Railway.

We may easily exaggerate the turbulence of Catholic Oxford in olden times, or underestimate the hold of Christian faith and supernatural virtue upon modern Oxford, or we may put down for virtue what is no virtue at all, but a mere absence of temptation to behave otherwise. In a sermon preached at St. Mary's, 8th April, 1832, John Henry Newman uttered these words: "When the laws of a country are upheld and obeyed, and property

secure, the world appears to realise that vision of constancy and permanence, which it presented to our youthful imagination Human nature appears more amiable than it really is, because it is not tried with disappointments; more just, because it is then its interest to respect the rights of others; more benevolent, because it can be so without self-denial." Representations of earlier times, he goes on to say, "are adduced as a proof how much better the world now is, than it was once; how much more enlightened, refined, intellectual, manly. . . . But, fairly as this superficial view of human nature answers in peaceable times; speciously as it may argue, innocently as it may experimentalise, in the rare and short-lived intervals of a nation's tranquillity; yet, let persecution or tribulation arise, and forthwith its imbecility is discovered. It is but a theory; it cannot cope with difficulties; it imparts no strength or loftiness of mind; it gains no influence over others. It is at once shattered and crushed in the stern conflict of good and evil."[1]

Thus wrote and spoke Newman, sixty-six years ago, of the virtue that appears to flourish away from faith and redeeming grace,—in short, of morality without dogma. And still we cannot trust that fair appearance.

[1] *Sermons before the University of Oxford.* Sermon V. On Justice, as a principle of Divine Governance.

NOTE.

The cry for Morality without Dogma, or Conscience without the Church, is fundamentally the same as that which struck upon St. Paul's ears, and which he answered in the Epistle to the Romans,—the Law without Faith, without Baptism, without Christ. This cry St. Paul met both as a moralist and as a theologian. As a moralist, he showed that the Law, the Law of the Ten Commandments, whether revealed on Sina to the Jews, or evident to the Gentiles by the light of nature, had never succeeded in getting itself kept. As a theologian he showed that, whereas all men have sinned, and provoked God to anger, and need His forgiveness, there is no forgiveness from God to man except through faith in Jesus Christ, and baptism incorporating man in the Church, which is the mystical Body of Christ. The substance of that doctrine holds good and is applicable to our times. The mere consideration of morality never makes man moral, if we take man generally and socially. Man is moralised by dogma. Away from dogma the very theory of morals is perverted, true duties are set aside, and fictitious obligations are set up,—even sin is justified and glorified. Needless to add, that forgiveness for sin is something quite unknown to Ethics. Morality without Dogma, attempted and failing, lies exposed to all the unappeased anger of God. We do not get rid of our Master simply by ceasing to believe in Him.

CONFERENCE XXII.

DOGMA AND DISCIPLINE.

Third Sunday in Lent, 13 March, 1898.

"No one system of belief can be adapted to the requirements of all men," says E. G. J. Very much the same idea inspired the celebrated electioneering address: "These are my principles, gentlemen, but if they don't suit you, they can be changed." We are not then to believe a doctrine, or hold a principle, because it is true, but because it suits us, and is adapted to our requirements,—a good illustration of the 'subjective method.' It would be of course absurd to apply this method to any practical matter, like war, engineering, finance, politics, medicine. The feasibility of a plan of campaign, the stability of a bridge, the solvency of a company, the issue of an alliance, the effect of a drug, are to be determined, not by personal prejudices and predispositions, but by the objective evidence of fact forthcoming in each case. Wherever we are roused to think the matter in hand to be one of life and death to ourselves, we discard our predilections, and go after the objective evidence of fact. Only when we turn our thoughts to our Creator and Lord and Judge, and to the will of God about us, and to the Being of God in Himself, and the history of God's

dealings with mankind, and to the fortunes of our own soul after death, hovering between happiness and misery everlasting,—only in this region of immensities and eternities are we content to believe anything we list, to pillow our heads on an opinion because it is soft and downy and soothing, while we view with equanimity and indifference our neighbour believing the very opposite. This means the relegation of religion from the field of knowledge to the undebatable ground of emotions and tastes. It means the making God a Being to dream of, not to know, still less to fear, serve, reverence, obey. It means the doing away with the personality of the Divine Being: for a God who is Master and Lord of all is not likely to acquiesce in being merely dreamt of, in being honoured or ignored, as the humour seizes men and their convenience dictates. A Personal God must assert Himself. He will not be put off on the plea that He is not wanted here, and is *de trop* there; or in philosophic language, that one system of belief in Him, as He has shown Himself in nature and revealed Himself in Christ, "cannot be adapted to the requirements of all men;" or again, as Cardinal Newman put it, "that Religion was nothing beyond a *supply* of the wants of human nature, not an external fact and a work of God."[1]

On the other hand, substitute for God an impersonal Idea, or Absolute, and religion becomes at once a vague, creedless emotion, to be indulged

[1] Newman on the *Idea of a University: Theology a branch of knowledge*, n. 4.

according to each man's caprice, or humour, or whim, or what he is pleased to call his 'conscience.' Only, be it observed, such use of the word *conscience* is a misnomer. There is no moral obligation in question. Though Pantheism be true, no one is morally bound to believe in Pantheism, any more than in gravitation. There is no present Majesty of Heaven about 'the Idea,' or 'the Absolute,' or about 'Humanity.' Flout the Idea, and it cannot be angry with you; contradict the Absolute, and you do it no wrong. Pantheism is the one theology that is ready to accommodate itself to every man's subjective state of mind, to allow every man to be his own pope, and in some sense his own god. If Protestantism has shown a proclivity in the same direction, it is because there is a secret logical connection traceable between Protestantism and Pantheism, in this that they both ignore the immeasurable height by which the Creator is exalted above the creature.[1] To the true Protestant, God is a sort of world-spirit, varying in various ages and among different nations, and falling in with the private judgment of every individual man. To the Protestant—the thorough-going and persistent Protestant, I mean—nothing is true in religion except what the individual chooses to think; and that much is true only for him who thinks so, and for as many others as choose to agree with him; but there is no standard of religious truth that can be enforced upon all men everywhere and always. This Protestant habit of mind is radically

[1] See an article to this effect in the *Dublin Review* for July, 1897.

pantheistic. The Protestant mind gets uneasy, if ever it meditates such utterances as: *Go teach (μαθητεύσατε, make disciples of) all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: he that believeth not, shall be condemned: he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the anger of God remaineth upon him* (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 36). These are sayings of a personal God. They are divine requirements, to which a thing so sacred as even "the requirements of all men" must give way.[1]

What then are we to make of those oft-quoted lines of Tennyson?—

> The old order changes, giving place to new;
> And God reveals Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

We must say, in the words of a famous character, "The point of that remark lies in its application." They are lines of thought and beauty and truth; but their truth, like other truth couched in poetry, is difficult to lay hold of aright, and may readily be misapprehended. We see them put forward for a sort of last rampart of Anglicanism, as though, however excellent be the Catholic and Roman faith, and however superior to all other faiths, yet God could not have meant one faith and one religious obedience to claim the sole allegiance of all mankind: just fancy the whole of London Roman Catholic. Therefore God is supposed to "reveal

[1] I would refer to the celebrated passsage, "I mean then by the Supreme Being," in Newman on the *Idea of a University: Bearing of Theology on other Knowledge*, § 7.

Himself in many ways," at St. Paul's, at the Oratory, at the City Temple, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, at the New Jerusalem. But surely not in many contradictory ways, that there should be with Him *It is* and *It is not* (2 Cor. i. 17). And the doctrines in these several places are in contradiction one with another.

But there is a certain amount of agreement, is there not, upon such points as the odiousness of sin, the justice of God, the forgiveness of sin through Christ? All these points, we reply, are taught by the Catholic Church definitely and practically, as no other body teaches them. Elsewhere this 'our common Christianity' melts away into a mist. Where else, except indeed in that portion of the Anglican Body which copies Catholic doctrine most closely, have you any clear conception of the divine method of forgiveness of sin? But now suppose a new place of worship opened, and in its precincts the doctrine of Christ's atonement is denied—a mosque, for instance. Shall we pare down still further our little core of divine revelation, so as to be able to say that God reveals Himself in the mosque equally with the other places, or allow that God reveals Himself less in this place than in the others? The second is the more reasonable alternative, or we may soon have no divine revelation left. But see where this leads to. We travel upwards from the New Jerusalem (Argyle Square, King's Cross) to St. Paul's. We have no right to stop short at the New Jerusalem, as though Swedenborgianism represented the highest level of divine truth made

known to man, or the Church of England teaching at St. Paul's either. Where is the fulness of divine revelation? That we are bound to seek.

Here are two rival verses to match Tennyson. I give them, not for the poetry, but for the truth that is in them.

> And Satan hides himself in varied guise,
> Lest one mere error should alarm the world.

Everywhere he denies as much Catholic truth as he dare; everywhere he puts in as many negations of the Christian revelation as the congregation will stand. But he must set bounds to his lying, and let some true teaching remain, or the lie will not go down; and men will flock to the Catholic Church as alone teaching any of Christ's truth, as alone Christian, alone Theistic. This would never do it would never suit Satan to have the whole strength of Christianity and of Theism manifestly vested in the Catholic Church. So he sets up many Christianities and many Theisms, all of them tainted with some tinge of Satanic error, all except one, which he has not set up, and endeavours to lead all the rest to join in hating, an endeavour not unattended with success.

God permits this operation of Satan, and even turns it to good. It may be—we cannot tell—the salvation of many souls that they have a hold only on a portion of Catholic truth: they might not live up to the full *truth as it is in Jesus* (Eph. iv. 21), if they were possessed of it: in that case He would be to their *ruin*, not to their *resurrection* (Luke ii. 34).

God gives men such truth as they *can bear* (John xvi. 12). To Catholics He distributes, by the hands of His apostles and their successors, whole *loaves* of truth: for the rest there are *twelve baskets of fragments left over* from the Catholic feast, *that every man may take a little* (John vi. 7—13). He will save every man who makes faithful use of the fragment that falls within his reach: still He *wishes all men to be saved and come to the* full *knowledge of the truth* (1 Tim. ii. 4). Whole and not fragmentary knowledge of Christ's message to mankind is the ordinary and normal means of salvation. Therefore He commissioned His apostles: *teach them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you* (Matt. xxviii. 20): and St. Paul records his own fidelity to his commission: *I have not held back from announcing to you the whole counsel of God* (Acts xx. 27). Hence a twofold duty, a duty of the preacher in the Catholic Church, and a duty of every man who hears him. It is the duty of the preacher to put forth and insist upon all the truths that Christ our Lord has revealed to the Church: and it is the duty of every man who hears to accept all those truths, every one of them. If he refuses so much as one, he impugns the authority that teaches them all; and incurs the malediction, *he that believeth not shall be condemned* (Mark xvi. 16). Understand, I speak of the man whose eyes are open to his position in this matter before God. Every such man is bound to embrace the fulness of Christian revelation, where alone such fulness is found, in the Catholic and Roman Church, and outside that Church he will find no salvation.

Even, however, in the Catholic Church belief must suffer refraction according to the various minds that receive it, learned and ignorant, civilised and barbarous, oriental and western. Thus the unity of Catholic faith emerges and comes out in varied forms of devotion, Italian, English, Irish, French, or Swiss. The Church by no means insists on "one good custom," but simply on one true faith, catholic and universal. Customs, or discipline, the Church divides into essential and accidental: in the latter she is able to allow endless variety. So, we may say, justice and cleanliness are essentials of British civilisation: we insist on them, to the best of our power, all the world over. In other matters we grant and even enforce a generous liberty to differ.

Again, Catholic doctrine may and must be delivered in greater or less abundance to suit the requirements, or rather the capacities, of various persons under instruction. *I have still many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now*, said our Lord (John xvi. 12); and St. Paul: *I fed you with milk, not with solid food, for ye were not yet capable: but we speak wisdom among the perfect* (1 Cor. iii. 2; ii. 6). There is a process of development and unfolding of Christian doctrine going on both in the mind of the individual Christian, as his formation in Christ progresses, and also in the mind of the Universal Church from one age to another. But in this process there is no turning back and recanting, no denial and casting off of articles once held on faith. Moreover, the essentials of faith

are clear and defined for all time, and can be conveyed, and are conveyed daily, into minds of very limited capacity. In this the gospel differs from philosophy, and even from the science of theology. Philosophy and theology are for the educated few; the gospel is for the multitude, for the poor

There are in the Church *credenda* and *agenda*, things to believe and things to do; in other words, doctrine and discipline. With regard to doctrine, the Church has only the power of a herald to proclaim (*κηρύττειν*, the original word for *to preach*). She cannot alter the matter of the proclamation put in her mouth by Christ and His Holy Spirit. She has nothing to unsay. She can only say more fully and completely what she has always said. It is otherwise with her discipline. The foundations of her discipline are the natural moral law, and over that she has no power, except to proclaim it in her pulpits, and enforce it in her spiritual tribunals: also certain enactments of Christ Himself touching the sacraments, their matter and form, and touching the hierarchical constitution of the Church—these enactments she can but stand by and obey. Over and above these foundations is superimposed a vast body of laws and customs, making up what is commonly understood by "the discipline of the Church." Here the Church is no longer herald, she is lawgiver. She made these laws, and she can abolish them. It is the discipline, not the doctrine of the Church, that can be altered to meet local and temporal exigencies. And it may

be said with a fair measure of truth that no one system of discipline can be adapted to the requirements of all men.

The following are some matters of Church discipline, variable by Church authority. The liturgy of sacrifice, and of the seven sacraments, except such parts as were determined by Christ Himself. The language of the liturgy. Liturgical vestments and instruments. Church architecture and music, in which matters the Church has interfered much less than she might have done. The celibacy of the clergy. Religious Orders, their existence and their constitutions. Fasting and abstinence. Canonical penance. Forms of procedure in ecclesiastical cases. Sundry, not all, of the impediments to matrimony Forbidden books.

This list is not exhaustive, but is enough to show something of the range of Church discipline, the subject matter of Canon Law. Canon Law, like Civil Law, has its birth in enactments, its growth and configuration by custom, its development according to judicial sentences and the opinions of the wise; and it may be repealed, annulled, abrogated, by the authority which gave it birth. When a General Council meets, its disciplinary decrees may be of more interest to the Church than its dogmatic definitions.

The dogma we know already, but the discipline will be such as the Council pleases to make or remake it. The chief labour of the Vatican Council, whenever it shall reassemble, will lie probably in the direction of discipline. The discipline of the

Church has altered in the last three centuries about as much perhaps as the law of England in the same time. It has local peculiarities, dictated by local possibilities and local requirements, which find voice in the utterances transmitted to Rome by local episcopates.

Thus the Catholic Church, so inflexible in dogmatic teaching, possesses still that power of adapting action to environment, which is characteristic of every living organism. The coming century may witness an interesting exercise of this power. The Church is being confronted again with the English-speaking races, the bulk of whom left her communion in the sixteenth century. Away from her they have grown to greatness and filled the earth. In the meanwhile her discipline and her practice has been adapted rather to the ideas of the Latin peoples. As the English-speaking races come to claim their own again in the Catholic Church, Church discipline will take its form, more than it has done in the past, from their ideas and their requirements.

The object of these Conferences has been to foster in you the growth of a Catholic mind, *the mind of Christ* (1 Cor. ii. 16). Narrowness is no part of such a mind. If the mind of English Catholics has been narrowed, it has been by the accidents of persecution and proscription and poverty. Those things have passed, or are passing. Your minds, I trust, are opening out at this University, not by abandonment of Catholic principles, but by their development and application.

One such principle I have kept before you all this term, the principle of Dogmatic Religion. For it John Henry Newman contended, as Fellow of Oriel and Vicar of St. Mary's, not less earnestly than as Priest of the Oratory and Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church. May his spirit be with us; may it be with all Catholics who ever come up to Oxford.

CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCES.

MICHAELMAS TERM, 1898.

The Ideal of the Christian Man.

CONFERENCE I.

A PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE IDEAL.

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, 16 October, 1898.

WE may ask a man 'what are you doing?' or we may ask him 'what are you aiming at doing?' If to the second of these questions he answers, 'Nothing, I am aiming at nothing,' we may be quite sure that he is doing nothing. Without an ideal, a man does nothing, he does no good, he simply drifts. There is a certain ideal, or standard of aim and action, pointed to by the expression, 'a University man.' I do not undertake to define this standard, but it includes among other things the notion of 'an educated English gentleman.' And this ideal is avowedly consistent with, it rather implies than does not imply, the notion of, 'a Christian man.' Christianity is still a note of our ancient Universities. It is yours to make Catholic

Christianity a note of this University as you represent it.

We are going then to study our ideal, to study ourselves as we should be if we were all that the Church wished of us; to study also the world as it would be in the like condition. At the threshold we are confronted by a great objection, by no means the least considerable of the objections that are urged against the Church. It is that the Christian ideal is pitched too high, that it is an impossible standard of goodness for human nature to attain to, even with all the aids that Christianity has to offer, except in a few exceptional cases; and that this impossibility is proved by history and daily experience, by the scandals within the Church herself—especially in the ages when she was most dominant in the world—by the revolt of nations from her, and by her comparatively small numbers and diminished influence at the present day. All these I allow are disheartening reflections for Catholics, and they tell strongly against the Church in an age like ours, when religions are estimated not so much by their theological credentials as by their proved fitness to govern men, and their adaptability to all the greatness and all the littleness too of the human heart.

We may have to go a little far back to deal with this difficulty. Let us ask ourselves whether it is really possible for a created world to exist with no evil in or about it. Years ago, I remember looking with wonder and awe upon that other branch of the hyperbola, which could never be got rid of,

being one and the same curve with the first branch, so that to describe the one was by implication to describe the other. In the inseparability of those two branches I have ever seen an image of the inseparability, or at any rate the universal actual conjunction, of good and evil everywhere in the created universe,—angels and devils, virtue and vice, good men and bad men, the spirit and the flesh, the Church and the world; *the morning, also the night* (Isaias, xxi. 12). Heaven and hell make the sum of this series of antitheses. All good is finally summarised and gathered in the one; all evil is separated and collected and for ever cast out into the other. But in this world, and on this side of the day of judgment, good and evil are everywhere blended, so intimately and so inextricably, that in considering what man belongs, or is to belong in the end, to the evil side or to the good side, it is our best wisdom ever to remember Our Saviour's precept, *Judge not* (Matt. vii. 1). Without raising the question of possibility and impossibility, but adhering to the mere order of fact, we say that under this law Providence has invariably acted, creating good everywhere with evil incidentally annexed to it.[1]

The foundation of the Christian Church made no derogation from this law. Peter confessed and Peter denied: over against the rest of the Apostles stood Judas: the faith was soon beset with heresies: there were martyrs and apostates too; worldly,

[1] See an article on *The Greek Doctrine of Necessity* in *The Month* for November, 1898.

time-serving bishops sat in the early Councils. The opposition between the Church and the world was developed from the moment that the Church first appeared as a power in the world: the struggle between the spirit and the flesh went on in St. Paul's time, and in St. Jerome's time, as it goes on now, in the heart of every Christian. And from the apostolic age, within the Church and not merely without, aye and in all parts of the Church, even the holiest, there has continued an unhappy succession of Christians, *enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction* (Phil. iii. 18). Thus the Messianic prophecy is fulfilled, *dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum*, "rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Psalm cix. 2). Only in the midst of enemies can Christ reign either in human society or in the heart of the individual; and these enemies continually succeed in driving Him now out of this part of His Kingdom, now out of that. So the conflict shall continue with varying fortunes throughout the field of human choice and action, till the King comes in judgment to take His own.

This posture of affairs is clearly contemplated in the New Testament, and foretold as a thing to last.[1] The Donatists in St. Augustine's day took scandal at the wickedness they discovered within the precincts of the Church, and wanted to set up another Church consisting only of the elect. That attempt has been a mark of heresy at all times.

[1] *E.g.* in such passages as Matt. vii. 13—21; xiii. 19—30; xxiv. 9—13; 40—51; xxv.; Luke, xviii. 8; John, xv. 18—20; Apoc. xvi. 8—11.

I need only mention such names as Novatians, Cathari, Wickleffites, Calvinists, Jansenists. The true Church on the other hand is for ever preaching penance to her own children, and conversion to the world at large. This is her perpetual occupation. She never looks to see the day in mortal ages, when the world will not need converting, and her own members will no longer have great sins to atone for. This was the point of the humour of a Dublin priest, in reply to an English visitor, who was deploring the manifestly evil works with which the sons of Erin at times stain the purity of their Catholic faith: "And, sure, what would be the use of the Sacrament of Penance, if they did not?" The voice of the Church, like the voice of the great orator of old, is generally that of an Opposition speaker, warning the established powers of the world, as Demosthenes warned the government at Athens, to be mistrustful of present ease, to deny themselves, to take alarm and provide for the future. When the Church had most of the world's power and wealth in her hand, then did the world come most to prevail against her. For the enemy is not so much the world, not the living men and women who make up mankind, but worldliness, or the love of the things of earth merely for earthly use and enjoyment. When the Church was richest and most powerful, this worldliness laid hold of many of her chief members. If opposition is not exactly the breath of the Church's nostrils, it is at any rate for her, if there be not too much of it, a healthy and invigorating breeze.

The Church then is not falsified and disproved by her not having yet subjugated all nations, or her having lost so much ground that once she held. But we are not at the end of the history of the Church. We are entering upon a century that will witness, along with other vast changes, the unification of the human race,—I mean the intercourse and intermingling of races as they have never mingled together and known one another before. There is the opportunity of the Catholic, or Universal Church. I am reminded of the words of St. Paul, *until the fulness of the Gentiles enters in* (Romans, xi. 25), on which a great modern commentator writes:

The revelation made to St. Paul, and by him here handed down to posterity, forbids us to interpret these prophecies (Matt. xxiv. 14; Mark, xiii. 10) in the narrow and literal sense which many theologians approve, as though they meant merely that there was to be some preaching of the gospel all the world over. According to the Pauline revelation, not only shall the Gospel be preached among all nations, but also it shall find credence among all and be received by all. Hence it is a lawful inference from this passage, that the end of the world will not come before the fulness of the nations and all Israel have entered the Church, and the entire earth is subject to the Gospel and become Catholic,—or at least has been so, cf. Luke, xviii. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 3.[1]

We however shall hardly see this consummation. The forces of evil are strong against us: they

[1] Cornely, S.J., *Commentarius in S. Pauli Epistolas.* Paris, 1896.

will always be strong, however much the Church may come to prevail. It is given to the Church, not to annihilate evil, but to resist it to the utmost, and to be for all time an effective counterpoise to evil. This phrase, *counterpoise to evil*, epitomises all that I have been saying to you. It tells you your public duty as Catholics, it tells you the unceasing endeavour required of you in the government of your own hearts.

> Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito
> Quam tua te fortuna sinet.[1]

They are lines of untranslatable majesty, of profound philosophy, and good counsel to a Christian man.

[1] Aeneid, vi 95, 96.

CONFERENCE II.

A RATIONAL IDEAL.

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost, 23 October, 1898.

SERMONS on the reasonableness of Christianity were once fashionable: many such must have been preached at Cambridge. That way we may call a 'way up' from reason to Christianity. I am about to argue that Christianity makes us reasonable: mine is a 'way down' from Christianity to reason. If we consider that conscience is not a distinct faculty from reason, but is merely reason working on peculiar ground, we see that to be conscientious is to be reasonable; and clearly Christianity goes to make us conscientious. Again, the moral law is the law of right reason, and Christianity enforces the moral law. The moral law directs that we should not be fools, nor beasts either. It warns us against spiritual sins and against sensual sins, against pride and licentiousness. It inculcates humility and purity: humility, that we should take and act upon a right view of ourselves, holding ourselves for such as we really are and no more, before God and our fellow-men: purity, that we should have our bodily appetites under command. That view is the view of reason,

and that command is the command of reason. And Christianity aids reason in maintaining that view and exercising that command. Christianity goes to make us humble and pure, and so far forth, rational.

The aid is needed. Some machinery will work automatically for a time, without man to tend it, as clockwork: but only for a time, and only in a limited sphere of usefulness: you cannot run an Atlantic liner by clockwork. The noblest machinery needs the constant attention of man. The mind of man secures the machinery working, as we may say, reasonably, safely, and according to its purpose: it prevents the locomotive from burying itself in the embankment, and the steamship from rushing upon the rocks. And the Christian faith and the grace of Christ come to the aid of reason, to make reason on the one hand modest and sober, cautious, and aware of its own limited capacity for dealing with the immensities of truth; and on the other hand to steady and confirm it in its command over appetite. Without the divine guidance that Christianity affords, reason has luxuriated and run wild; it has lost itself in extravagance, it has been blinded by sensuality, it has sometimes despaired of all higher truth.

The Christian has his *conversation*, or citizenship, *in heaven* (Phil. iii. 20): at the same time he is, or should be, a shrewd, sober-minded, cool-headed, sensible denizen of earth. This you know from your own experience. If any one recommended to you a person as being exceedingly silly, 'a perfect

ass,' and therefore a fit and proper person to become a Catholic, you might reply that his approaches to the Catholic Church would probably be only another of his follies; that you should expect him lightly to take up Catholicity and as lightly to fling it down again. Silly clerics are not wanted for the sanctuary, nor silly novices for religious orders. When a Catholic wants to shake himself loose from folly, to have his intellect bright, and his judgment sober, and his whole mind at peace, for the purpose of an important examination or a great decision in life, you know what he will do, what you yourselves would do,—approach the Sacraments, which it is your privilege as Catholics to approach, of Confession and Holy Communion. It is a way to quicken, or I may say, to *mobilise* your reasoning powers, and give you the full use of them. Persons who have had experience of retreats will tell you that they never feel so entirely rational as when for some days they have been looking away from the things of the world hard at the things of eternity, under the guidance of Holy Church.

Or consider the utter unreason and blind stupidity of many of the attacks upon the Catholic Church, those of the Protestant Alliance for instance. To enforce upon such assailants the ordinary laws of evidence is to crush them. A great part of our work in England is battling against foolish prejudice, the legion of phantoms and fables which beset the minds of our countrymen, when they have to deal with the Catholic Church, follies which confound their otherwise clear judgments, and bias their

minds, usually so fair and open. But we must confess that Catholics have their prejudices too. It is no prejudice, but sound Catholic faith, to extol the Catholic Church above every other religion. But to be ready to believe all evil of those who are not Catholics is not sound Catholicism; it is forgetfulness of the Christian lesson, not lightly to believe evil of your neighbour. Stories do reach us at times from a distance about Protestants, Jews, Freemasons, and other such anticatholic bodies, scarcely less absurd than the fables of the Protestant Alliance. We are not arguing that all Catholics are reasonable, or that we ourselves behave reasonably in all or most of the occurrences of life: only that the ideal which we have before us as Christians and Catholics is an ideal of conduct regulated by reason, —by something more indeed than mere reason, but not subversive of reason, rather confirmatory of it. If I were asked what *natural* means would most aid the return of England to the ancient faith, I should be tempted to reply, 'If every Englishman were well drilled in logic, and,' I might add, 'in the real facts of history.' Bad reasoning and perversion of history are two most doughty champions of all that is anticatholic.

I fancy I hear some one exclaim: 'Oh but I know some holy people, and they are such oddities and such simpletons: then look at the horrid excesses that we read of in the Lives of the Saints: it really does look as though one could not be a Saint, or very holy, without parting with his reason.' I should wish to consider the case of the

Saints apart from the rest: a Saint, canonised or canonisable, is something indefinitely higher than an ordinary holy person. Of the Saints, presently: about ordinary holy persons I would observe that holiness has the property of intensifying all a man's activities that are not sinful, and throwing all his attributes into strong relief. Thus his whims and peculiarities get intensified with the rest. The holy man is dogged and obstinate, intense and earnest, in his whims as in his devotions. Like Brutus, whatever he wills, he wills strongly. Thus his whims become amusing and laughable to those who know him, all the more so because of the contrast with the rest of his noble and serious character, and the respect which that character inspires. But a few oddities do not make a man fundamentally silly. Ignorance of the ways of the world may come of no defect of reason, but of a somewhat too exclusive attention to higher and better things. A man may be called a simpleton for showing such ignorance, and yet be anything but a shallow mind. Show me a real silly, wrong-headed man, and I will answer for it, that there is not much of Christian asceticism in his character: he is no subject for such spiritual training. It is a received maxim among ascetic writers, that whatever perturbs and disorders the reason, whatever savours of giddiness and flightiness, whatever is fantastic, bizarre, tending to cerebral excitement and beyond that to insanity, bears upon it the stamp of the Evil Spirit; such is not the work of God the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier.

The Saints will occupy us in another Conference. I may only say here that in reading the Life of a canonised Saint we must ever bear in mind that he was united with God and borne up by God as other even holy men are not: that in such divine union and with such divine support certain audacities were reasonable in him, which in ordinary Christians would be 'horrid excesses': that the Saints are *fools for Christ's sake*, such folly being in them the highest wisdom, while Christians of humbler mould are fain to be content with being *prudent in Christ* (1 Cor. iv. 10). A story may make this distinction clear. You know that a simple priest gives the blessing with one sign of the cross, a Bishop with three. A Bishop once noticed one of his priests giving the blessing in episcopal form. "You should not make three signs of the cross," he said to him afterwards. "Why, my lord," was the priest's answer, "I saw you do it yourself." Certain ceremonies are rubrical only in a Bishop, and certain conduct is rational only in a Saint. But even the Saints, when the divine afflatus was not specially upon them, walked steadily and patiently in the ways of common sense. Witness the great founders of Orders. I never can take up the Life of St. Teresa, or read her writings, without thinking: 'For all her ecstasies, did ever more sensible woman live?' St. Aloysius showed great tact and business capacity in settling a family dispute. Depend upon it, no Saint was ever either a coward, or a sluggard, or a fool.

St. Ignatius describes the working of the Spirit

of God as "rendering the soul quiet and pacifying it in its Creator and Lord."[1] The motto of the sons of St. Benedict is *Pax*, peace with God, and the pacific empire of grace and reason within the soul. Many of our Lord's miracles symbolise the same lesson. Under diabolic influence we read of a man: *He foameth at the mouth, and gnasheth his teeth, and oft he falleth into the fire and into the water.*[2] And of another: *Night and day he was among the tombs, and on the hills, crying out and beating himself with stones.* But after contact with Our Saviour the same man is found *seated, clothed, and in his right mind.*[3] Perhaps too we can testify to the fulfilment in our own souls of the prophecy of Michæas, repeated by the Church in one of the Responses for the Third Sunday in Advent, *Et pax erit in terra nostra dum venerit.*[4]

[1] *De motibus animæ*, reg. 3. [2] Mark, ix. 19; Matt. xvii. 14.
[3] Mark, v. 5, 15. [4] Resp. 2. ad mat. (adapted from Mich. v. 5).

CONFERENCE III.

A SPIRITUAL IDEAL.

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, 30 October, 1898.

Not for any controversial purpose, but as aptly leading up to my theme, I quote some words of the Archbishop of Canterbury in his Charge on the 10th of this October. After admitting that there very well may be souls of the faithful departed who, though not lost, will yet not go straight to heaven, His Grace says of them: "They are not yet sanctified: they have not yet the holiness without which none shall see the Lord." The Archbishop is old enough to remember the Gorham Controversy of 1850 on baptismal regeneration. I do not know what view His Grace then took or now takes on that subject: but for a believer in baptismal regeneration it seems an extraordinary thing to say of souls passing out of the body in such a state as to be worthy of ultimate salvation, "they are not yet sanctified." Not though they have been baptized, my Lord? are not the baptized regenerate and sanctified? if a man casts off the sanctification of his baptism, and dies without having recovered it, shall he find holiness in another world? I believe it would not be fair to hold His Grace to the strict

meaning of his words. I view them rather as a slip or oversight. He had in his mind, I think, not the holiness that is given in baptism, but that perfection of Christian conduct in which even good men are often wanting. Such men may be beset even at their last hour by much inordinate solicitude for this world's goods, by petty rancours and jealousies, and by such a chilling atmosphere intervening between them and God, that they habitually feel towards Him as towards a Being whom they must reckon with and cannot do without, rather than as towards a Father.

Conduct men do understand, but the holiness of baptismal grace, otherwise called sanctifying grace, is little understood, indeed is habitually overlooked, beyond the pale of the Catholic Church. Here I believe we touch one of the greatest of the differences between the average Anglican mind and the mind of Catholic theology. Holiness is not visible, as conduct is: therefore holiness is forgotten and ignored. There is indeed an outward beauty and mien of holiness, sometimes very striking: but appearances are fallacious. Many are holy, who do not look it. It is also true that holiness must bear fruit in good works, or it will die; and good works are visible. But good, or at least socially useful works, may grow on other trees than holiness: and holiness may exist in a state of comparative sterility, so far as appearances go. There is holiness in the soul of a baptized infant, months before good works are possible. It is difficult to say precisely what sort of an entity this baptismal holiness is.

If we say it is a *physical* entity, and makes a physical change in the soul, we are asked what sort of change, and we cannot tell. To call it a *moral* entity is only hiding our ignorance under a name. Besides, if we go too far in that direction, we shall be stranded on the shoal of Lutheranism and 'imputed justice.' A safe thing to say is that baptismal holiness, or the holiness of sanctifying grace, is a special *dedication* of the soul and body of the recipient to God as Lord, and further as Father, so that the being becomes God's own, and *allied to God*, in a way that it was not by the mere fact of God having created it.

The baptized are described by St. John as *made sons of God*, as *born of God* (John, i. 12, 13); by Our Lord as *born again of water and the Holy Ghost* (John, iii. 5); by St. Paul as *a new creation in Christ* (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15); by St. Peter as *partakers of the divine nature* (2 Pet. i. 4), an expression repeated in the Church's prayer at the mixing of the chalice at Mass, "grant us to become partakers of His divinity, who has deigned to become partaker of our humanity." This points to something indescribably higher than the life of a reasonable man. This higher life of the baptized Christian, the adopted child of God; this life of sanctifying grace, or supernatural holiness, is the spiritual ideal proposed to the Christian man. We shall understand this ideal better for considering in what it culminates. It culminates in the vision of God, called the *beatific vision*, in heaven. We may know something of the greater height by measuring the lower level above

which it towers. What then is the highest good which the life of mere reason and philosophic virtue could possibly conduct man to? A good beyond this world: a good attained after death: a good lasting for ever: in fact, the perpetual natural happiness of the soul. The soul of man is naturally immortal; it is not made immortal by baptism. Very possibly, but for the faith given us in baptism, we should waver and hesitate over the philosophic reasons alleged in proof of immortality. Immortality is a fact of philosophy for all that, it is a condition of human nature, not an endowment of grace. The proposition is true in the abstract, that mere reason is a sufficient guide to a happy immortality: that whoever leads a reasonable life, rising no higher and sinking no lower than the level which reason indicates, will be for ever happy when he comes to die. I say it is true 'in the abstract,' apart from the actual conditions in which God has been pleased to place man. God might have left man with no better guide than reason: God might have never intended man to rise above a mere human, that is, a rational standard. In that case, the eternal happiness of the man who had shaped his life according to reason would have been a life of philosophic contemplation, not of God directly seen, but of the works of God, and of God as knowable in His works. It would have been a sufficient and a satisfying happiness, for mere man as such. But God has called man to higher things; and the man in whose ears that call sounds in vain, the man to whom higher things are proposed, and he contemns

them, is not a reasonable man, and deserves not a reasonable man's reward.

Yesterday, to-day, every day, some baptized man dies with the grace of his baptism upon him. He may have lost it at sundry times of his life, but he has got it back again, and he dies with it. When the King comes in to view his guests, this one is found with the needful *wedding-garment* (Matt. xxii. 12). It is not for want of holiness, if he is not admitted at once to the eternal feast of All Saints. If he were not holy now, he never would be made holy: nay, he is now in the instant of his death as holy as ever he shall be: for holiness, strange to say, is obtainable by man only on this sinful earth, in the midst of struggles and sorrows. The measure of holiness with which any man dies is his measure for eternity: it is the measure of his particular glory in heaven. So much holiness, so much glory: no holiness, no heaven. And holiness, as I have endeavoured to explain, does not mean conduct, nor moral character: though conduct and character are large factors in determining holiness. Holiness is the supernatural gift of God in baptism and in the other sacraments: a gift which man must guard and augment by the good works which God's grace will enable him to do.

We must consider what those good works are. To begin with, they are the works of the moral virtues, justice, truth, fortitude, self-restraint, and command of appetite, the works of one who "dare do all that doth become a man." They are the works of a reasonable man: but in a Christian they

are done on grounds of reason, and further on grounds of faith. I will take the example of a virtue, generously exercised at Cambridge, the virtue of hospitality. It is a natural and reasonable thing that we should be hospitable to one another. The ancient Greeks and Romans, you know, prized this virtue highly. The Christian will practise it for as many good reasons as the pagan practises it, and for one supremely good reason more, the teaching of Our Saviour: *I was a stranger, and you harboured me: inasmuch as you did it to one of these my brethren, you did it to me* (Matt. xxv. 35, 40).

Speaking of certain acts of moral virtue, Our Lord says: *Do not the heathen this?* (Matt. v. 47). What the heathen have not done, nor thought of doing, is the exercise of the theological virtues, the proper and peculiar work of a Christian. *And now there remain*, says St. Paul (1 Cor. xiii. 13), as the permanent endowment of the Church on earth, *faith, hope, charity. The greater of these is charity:* because it alone passes unchanged into heaven. The saints in heaven, and good Christians on earth, alike in the substance of the act, though not in the intensity of it, love God as their Father, and one another as brethren in Christ. But hope some day shall be exchanged for fruition: we cease to hope for what we securely enjoy. *Who hopeth for what he seeth* (Rom. viii. 24) already his own? Faith is an immediate knowledge on the word of God of things that we do not see with the eye either of body or mind. Our attitude to God, while we advance

towards heaven by faith, is expressed in the Greek poet's line:

Hearing thy voice, but seeing not thy countenance.[1]

The immediate knowledge of faith must pass away into the immediate knowledge of vision, for which it is a preparation.

Cambridge men, I am told, love to arrive at practical conclusions. This then is the practical conclusion following upon what I have said. The spiritual ideal is stamped upon the soul by baptism. It is renewed by the other Sacraments: most especially by the great Sacrament of the Altar. That is why Sacraments are a necessity. The frequentation of the Sacraments costs some effort in term time and also in vacation time. Made or neglected in the one, the effort becomes easier or more difficult in the other.

[1] κλύων μὲν αὐδήν, ὄμμα δ' οὐχ ὁρῶν τὸ σόν (Euripides, *Hipp* 85) The words are spoken by Hippolytus to his patron Artemis.

CONFERENCE IV.

A GLORIOUS IDEAL.

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, 6 November, 1898.

THE notion that I wish you to carry away this morning is that the standard set before the Christian man is glorious, inasmuch as it calls for heroism at times: there should be a dash of heroism in every Christian character. I always feel a certain respect for any soldier that I meet. There is a man, I say to myself, whose uniform proclaims him ready to march where death awaits him. So is every Christian bound to die for his faith, when his faith is put to that trial. As Cardinal Newman says, in the days of persecution it was not so much the great and learned, it was the ordinary rank and file of the Christian army, who died martyrs. And short of death, the Christian is bound to make any other sacrifice, however costly, for the confession of his faith and the observance of the commandments. He is bound to forgive, that is, to dismiss all personal rancour from his will, however much he may be injured or insulted. He is bound to refuse high emolument, when it can only be bought by the repudiation of Catholic faith or practice. He is bound to observe the marriage laws, whether of

nature, as taught by the Church, or the positive enactments of the Church herself: this matter is often a great touchstone of Catholic fidelity. It is true that heroism is not usually demanded of us under pain of mortal sin except incidentally by a deviation from the normal course of things, and particularly by the perverse will of people about us, as persecutors, tempters, and the like; but deviations are not unfrequent, and perverse wills are many and manifold. Even where heroism is not an obligation, it is often a strong counsel. I have had occasion at times to say to people: 'There is one way out of your difficulties: take the heroic course: if you do not, your troubles will haunt you perpetually.' In one sense the whole of Christian life is heroic: it is impossible to 'flesh and blood.' The natural determination and energy which turn you into a great athlete, or carry you successful through an examination, will not enable you to lead a life of faith, hope, and charity, and save your soul. That you cannot do without the special assistance of God, called grace.

To animate us to this heroism we have the encouragement of a great tradition. There is a tradition in the Universities, there is a tradition in the army and navy. A great tradition, wherever it has been accumulated, works to keep up the life of the present generation to the height of some eminence attained in the past. We say of certain behaviour that it would be unworthy of Cambridge, or unworthy of the British navy. The evil of a revolution is that, being a rupture of continuity, it

breaks off these great and noble traditions. The new government 'knows not Joseph'; it is not of the lineage of David. We may point to one great European nation, suffering at this moment cruelly for having obliterated traditions of ancient majesty. An element of the strength of Great Britain is the tradition of nearly seven centuries since Magna Charta. The Roman Empire, enfeebled by internal decay, and shaken by strong assaults from without, still stood, putting off the evil day of its fall in the strength of its mighty tradition. The tradition of the Church is written in the lives of the Saints. The Church has created her own order of posthumous nobility by the process of Canonisation. There is no honour on earth like the honour of being a canonised Saint. To attain it, it is necessary to have practised all Christian virtue in an heroic degree, and to have one's final perseverance in good attested by miracles wrought after death. The lives of the Saints do not teach us literally what we should do, for we have not the graces that they had; and the attempt to reproduce their high actions without their high graces would be a failure and a folly. We should not rise to pray by night, as Luigi Gonzaga did, and insist in praying on, hour after hour, in the darkness, till we had prayed for one whole hour without a distraction. The action is not for us, but the spirit of the action. It is a spirit of heroic devotedness to the worship of God. When we have imbibed something of that spirit, we shall not hesitate to rise in time to say our morning prayers, and to cut short some amusement, or

conversation, or novel-reading, lest night prayers become an impossibility. There is no approaching the Sacraments with any frequency or regularity without frequent and regular self-denial to find the time requisite. This is just the dash of heroism of which I am inculcating the necessity.

The name of Blessed Thomas More is close linked with that of the martyred Chancellor of this University. They were lovable and loving in life, and in death they were not divided, Blessed John Fisher and Blessed Thomas More. I have long been struck with one bright example in the life of Blessed Thomas, of sudden heroism breaking out like a flame from the sober grey sky of every day Christian goodness. It was the 13th day of April, 1534. The new oath was ready, declaring at once the royal succession in the line of Anne Boleyn, and the independence of the Crown and Kingdom and Church of England of the Holy See. The parish priests of the neighbourhood of London were called upon to take the oath. I am ashamed to say that they crowded up to Lambeth, and swore away their fealty to the Pope by the score. One layman was called upon, the late Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. His oath was reckoned to be as honourable as a priest's; and besides, there was no such legal expert in the kingdom. Sir Thomas stood at the bar of the Council, before Cranmer and Audley and Cromwell. The oath of succession he was ready to take: he thought that Parliament had power to alter the succession. But for the ecclesiastical

portion of the oath he said: "I blame no other man's conscience, if he swear: but I find it not in my conscience to take this oath." That night Sir Thomas was detained, an unwilling guest, at Lambeth Palace. Thence he was sent to the Tower and to martyrdom. It was not his first refusal. On the 6th of March he had refused the same oath. They let him go that time in his boat up the river back to his home at Chelsea. By the way he was very merry; and walking that evening in his garden with his son-in-law Roper: "Wilt thou know, son Roper, why I was so merry? In good faith I rejoiced that I had given the devil a foul fall, and that with those lords I had gone so far as, without great shame, I could never go back again." So the model of English laymen grasped the martyr's palm. The hour for heroism came; and by God's grace he was ready, when others were not.[1]

In speaking of the glorious ideal of the Christian man, I have had in mind throughout the grand Pauline discourse on *faith*, and the *great cloud of witnesses* to the faith, and *Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who endured the cross and despised the shame*. Read Hebrews xi. 1 to xii. 2. 'Pauline' I call the passage, because, from whatever inspired pen it proceeded, it expresses the very core of St. Paul's thought and teaching. Faith is a *footing*

[1] See Father Bridgett's *Life of Sir Thomas More*, ed. 2, pp. 341, 351, 353, 354. There is no better illustration of my theme than the martyr's interview with his daughter in the Tower, pp. 373, 374.

gained, a *present embodiment* (ὑπόστασις, xi. 1) *of things hoped for*. That which is is *unseen*, it *argues to be*. By faith we resist the tyranny and preponderating influence of visible things, knowing them to have been drawn out of nothingness by the invisible power of God (xi. 3). Enoch walked with God by faith and was well-pleasing to Him, till God took him to Himself in an extraordinary manner (xi. 5, 6). By an heroic exercise of faith Noe built his ark, amid the scoffs of a generation who thought his labour thrown away (xi. 7). In faith, at God's call, Abraham went out of his country, and lived a wanderer in the land that God promised him, centuries before his posterity came to possess it. In the same faith lived Isaac and Jacob, pilgrims on earth, looking for the promised land. Hence God was not ashamed to be called the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob (xi. 8, 9, 13—16, cf. Luke, xx. 37). By faith Abraham was ready to offer up Isaac, the heir of the promises (xi. 17—19). By faith Joseph, dying, gave commandment for the carrying of his bones, when the children of Israel should leave Egypt, and their interment in the land that God had promised to give to Israel (xi. 22). By faith Moses threw in his lot with his people, rather than with Pharaoh's court, and quitted Egypt at their head, for *he endured as seeing the invisible*, words which are an apt epitome of the life of every Christian faithful man (xi. 24—27). By faith the saints subdued kingdoms, and did other miracles (xi. 33, 34, 35): by faith not less heroic they made trial of mockings and scourgings, and all manner of

hardship (xi. 35—38). This is an incomplete catalogue, embracing only those ante-dated Christians, the saints of the Old Law. We should add now St. Peter and St. Paul himself, St. Stephen and St. Lawrence, the Apostles and Martyrs; St. Agnes and St. Cecily, and the troop of Virgin Martyrs; St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory and the Doctors of the Church; St. Benedict and the Founders of the Religious Orders; the Martyrs of Japan and of England; St. Catherine of Siena and St. Teresa, and St. Philip Neri and St. Vincent of Paul. Even so the catalogue remains incomplete. It will only be completed by the addition of the great Saints and Martyrs of the last days, the precursors of the King in judgment.

The spirit of the martyrs is in every sound Christian heart. Without it, religion is only a plaything and a conventionality for Sundays.

CONFERENCE V.

AN HISTORICAL IDEAL.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, 13 November, 1898.

CHRISTIANITY has wrought certain vast effects upon the character of men, upon their conduct, and upon the development of nations. It has entered the field of history and become an important part of the study of the historian. There was a controversy in the days of St. Augustine, and his great work *De Civitate Dei* was written as a contribution to that controversy, whether true religion should not help to the prosperity of an empire, and whether Christianity had so helped, or whether rather it had not stood in the way, and proved the ruin of at least one great empire. A similar controversy was being carried on not long ago in the pages of *The Spectator*.[1] There is a very wise remark in Mill's *Logic*,[2] to the effect that in the sciences of Medicine and Sociology, the sciences which regard the well-being of the natural body of the individual or of the moral body politic, induction by accumulation of instances is an exceedingly fallacious process. The reason is the great multitude of the causes at work,

[1] See the issue for October, 1898.
[2] In the chapter on the Experimental Methods.

so that the same effect may be produced in the first instance by one cause, in the second instance by another, in the third instance by a third, and in none of the instances by a certain fourth cause to which you fondly attribute it in them all. It may even be that the fourth cause all along has been positively acting against that effect. Instances are not wholly without their value, but we should rather analyse the nature of each cause separately, and thence deduce the effect that may be expected of it. Thus we should expect natural virtue, such as justice and fortitude, to tell in favour of national prosperity, and true religion to be a support to natural virtue. But false religion also, even in its very falsity, may help on to empire. One element of the success of the early Mohammedan conquerors was the indifference of their soldiers to death. That was brought about by the belief in which they had been nurtured, that whoever died fighting for the Prophet's cause was sure of heaven, which meant to them an everlasting round of sensual gratifications.

When we come to examine the phrase 'national prosperity,' we find that two different meanings may be hidden away under it. It may mean the growth of empire, the multiplication of colonies and trading-stations, the accumulation of wealth, large cities, a great inheritance of naval and military prestige and power. Or it may mean the abolition of squalid poverty, of brutality, of flagrant public sin; it may mean a general level of contentedness and cheerfulness, even upon not a large fortune; it may mean peace and amity among the classes, with a

general diminution of crime and misery. The latter I may call *social* prosperity; the former, *imperial* prosperity. The two are largely inter-dependent, still they are distinct. No one, I think, will maintain that imperial prosperity varies *directly* with the amount of true religion among the people. The most that can be urged is that it varies *jointly* with that and perhaps a score of other different factors. Hence in a particular case it is difficult to argue the truth of a nation's religion from the greatness of their empire. Religion will be more potent in determining *social* prosperity. From what I am about to say of the effects of Christianity upon character, it will be apparent that in social progress rather than in the making of empires can we trace the beneficent workings of the religion of Christ our Saviour.

The 'empire-making virtues,' as we may call them, are not the formal and precise results which supernatural religion looks for in the human heart. Greed of gain and territory is not the breath of the Gospel. Capacity of ruling barbarous subjects, perseverance under military and political difficulties, that *mens æqua in arduis* which Warren Hastings proposed to himself as his motto, has no necessary connection with Christianity. Christianity curbs, chastens, and softens man rather than excites him ; its strength is the strength of endurance rather than attack. On the other hand, the acquisition of empire is not inconsistent with Christianity, not even with Catholic Christianity. There was no British Empire before the Reformation, but there was the Spanish

Empire in vigorous growth. Where was the British Empire, or what the influence of England in Europe, in the reign of James I.? And if the Spanish Empire declined in the eighteenth century, was that by Spain becoming more Catholic? Spain, like France, was rather decatholicised in the eighteenth century.

Leaving these uncertainties, I will remind you that to us Christianity means Catholicism. The betterment of men's minds by Christian influences, whatever betterment there has been, is the glory of the Catholic Church. We acknowledge and praise the good done by baptized men of other communions, who would be horrified, some of them, at seeing themselves and their good deeds claimed by the Roman Catholic Church as hers. Did we not believe hopefully and sympathetically in good men and good deeds to be found outside the visible Catholic pale,—did we not recognise the workings of the Spirit of God among men not in visible communion with the Holy See, leading them nearer to that communion,— England and an English University would be a dismal and deplorable place to live in, spiritually considered. But, we say, whatever good these men have done they have done it on Catholic lines, by virtue of the remnant of Catholic principle still left to them. The *No Popery* element in their souls has been sterile of good, and must be sterile, except in the way that the persecutor's sword has produced good, unintentionally, in the Church. The good that they have done rouses us to emulation; it is no inducement to us to join them. We are satisfied to belong to the great parent stock,

from which all other Christianities have gone forth, and to which perhaps, in God's merciful providence, they are all destined to return. They have gone forth carrying with them severally certain fragments of blessings which have remained with us in their entirety. We have no mind to exchange the integer for the fraction, the whole for the part. The Anglican Eucharist, the blest bread and wine, reckoned to sanctify the soul and to engender Christ there, like the water of Baptism and the chrism of Confirmation, is not the bread on which we wish to feed, for we have a better. The Anglican spiritual adviser,—we do not need him either, we know where to go for spiritual advice when we require it, as we do require it at times: but better than advice is sacramental absolution and release from our sins. We have an infallible teacher, not of politics, not of economics, not of art and science, not of the ordinary matters that come under dispute in the senate and the market-place and the law-court and the lecture-hall, but of justice and truth; of the morality of our actions, not whether they are expedient and wise for earthly purposes, but whether they are sinful or permissible before God; also of the truth about God and about Christ and redemption. What has the ordinary prittle-prattle of men to say on such a subject as the Immaculate Conception? What can even philosophy tell us about it? The Pope rules the question in Christ's name; and we receiving and studying his teaching come to have clear ideas about the grace of God, and sinfulness, and the conditions of sanctification

and salvation, points which hardly any but Catholics appreciate clearly and correctly.

As I have said, the Christian and Catholic Church was not instituted for the making of empires, but for the disposing of souls to sanctity, and thereby to salvation. In discharging this office, the Church, as it strikes me, has wrought four principal effects upon the character of men. It has taught men *humility*, a virtue that the pagan world scarcely knew of. Humility does not figure on the list of Aristotelian virtues. The Latin word *humilis*, I believe, is always used in the bad sense of 'base,' 'cringing.' A philosopher in pagan times was a byword for self-conceit. He was pictured "stalking along with drawn up eyebrows." Good men like Cicero and the younger Pliny were for ever playing to the theatre, imagining how their deeds would be admired by the spectators or by posterity. *All their works they do to be seen of men* (Matt. xxiii. 5). Christianity teaches a man to live in the presence of a Creator, before whom he is *dust and ashes* (Gen. xviii. 27); of a God of holiness, before whom all his good works are as *filthy rags* (Isai. lxiv. 6), *i.e.* have their goodness intermingled with innumerable defects. The attitude of man before such a God is an attitude of humility. No moral virtue is more characteristically Christian. To be pagan on the other hand is either to be abject, base, grovelling before men, your fellow-sinners, or to be proud; proud when you prosper, abject and broken-spirited when you fail.

As the Church has taught men humility before

God, it has taught them that self-command and control of their own appetites, which is the virtue of *purity*. Not that this virtue was unknown in the pre-Christian world, or that even Catholics universally have been, or are, models of its exercise. I remember how St. John Chrysostom describes the semi-Christian Antioch of the fourth century in language that recalls the old pagan Athens. And does not Dante place in his *Inferno* a bishop, the motive of whose translation from one see to another, more obscure, was the wish of the "servants' servant" to hide away the man's infamy? Such stories are to be read with the caution that *corruptio optimi pessima*, as the scholastic adage has it, and that of all pagans the worst is a paganised Christian. I remember again Plato's glimpse of "the vision of Beauty along with Chastity set up on holy pedestal" (*Phædrus*, 254 B). But the ideals of paganism were frequently impure; and as for the practice of the pagan world, we, with all our infirmities, have to thank God our Redeemer, who has *brought* us *up out of the pit of misery and the mire of filth* (Ps. xxxix. 2).

In regard of external goods Christianity has taught mankind *detachment*. I use St. Philip Neri's word, which Cardinal Newman has made classical in English. Plato cried down the sensible world, and exalted as objects of human devotion certain intellectual ideals, which he took to be the true realities, as the ideal Beauty and the like; and he wrote delightful things of the happy eternity after death which the soul of the philosopher was to spend in the contemplation of these ideals. Plato

wrote for the few, and affected only the few. The tidings of Christ Risen made the next world a reality to the mind of the many. After that, people of the common sort, young men and young maidens, despised torments, because they *looked forward to the reward:* they *endured as seeing the invisible* (Heb. xi. 26, 27). No other men have lived as Christians have lived and do live, subordinating the present world ever to the world to come. That is *detachment.* It is the world's chief quarrel with true Christianity and with the Catholic Church. The world takes detachment to be a flout and insult to itself. The Christian is *detached*, or *unworldly*, above other men, because he alone has from the resurrection of his Saviour any definite approximation of thought to the good things of the world to come. The first Easter day made a bridge from this world to the next. Whether a religion that inculcates detachment is apt to be a notably potent force moving men to amass wealth, I leave you to consider.

There is a hideous story which I once tried to read, called *Cæsar's Tower.* The tower which gives the name to the book and is depicted on the cover, is a huge crematorium, whither the bodies of the working people are wheeled, and thrown in there without enquiry, into the ever ready flames, while the masters live in luxury in a Socialist Commonwealth. I doubt if the slaves who worked in chains on the lands of Italy in Cicero's time were treated with much more regard for their lives. It is the way of pagan rationalism ever to exalt the mighty and to put down the weak. *Humanum paucis vivit*

genus (Lucan V. 343); the human race is accounted to live for the benefit of a few. Paganism bears hard on the soulless many. On the other hand it is an essential tenet of Christianity that in every man there is an immortal soul, and that for every one of these souls Christ died. *Behold, all souls are mine* (Ezech. xviii. 4), is the word of the God who created them and of the Saviour who died for them. Charity, the great virtue of a Christian towards his neighbour, is founded upon *respect for his neighbour's soul.* This virtue in regard of our fellow man, along with *humility* before God, *purity* in the control of self, and *detachment* in the use of exterior goods, makes up the square of moral virtues, which I consider to have been impressed upon human life and human history eminently by Christianity and by the Catholic Church.

For modern man the ways are parting between the thought and practice of the ancient Greeks and the thought and practice of Catholic Christianity. To the ancient Greek this world was a place of beauty and of pleasure. The beauty that he loved was the health, strength, and gracefulness of the human form. He loved all pleasure, but rather on the intellectual than on the sensual side. He disliked gross animal excesses, because they were tasteless, because they were out of proportion and measure, and because they spoilt a man, disfiguring his body, undermining his strength, and impeding his thought. To the Greek, man was his own end, and existed for himself. His aim was to be, and to appear to the eye that beheld him and to the ear

that caught his words, the perfection of manly beauty and intelligence, while youth and vigour remained to him. Old age to the Greek was a sad autumn, and death an interminable winter. There is something modern in all this.

We know how the Greek mind decayed, and Greek genius was quenched, and empire was lost to Greece, in mad pursuit of beauty, in impatience of all control, in over speculation and over talking, to the neglect of action. Very striking is the contempt which a Roman like Cicero, who owed so much to Hellenic culture, felt and expressed for the Greeklings of his day. But the unexpected came to be. A resurrection was vouchsafed to the Greek mind in the advent of Christianity. Christian theology revived the glories of the philosophy that lit up the Hellas of old. The four great Greek Doctors of the Church, St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. John Chrysostom, recalled the subtlety of Attic thought and the eloquence of the Attic orators. Santa Sophia is not unworthy of the race that built the Parthenon. The imperial city of Constantine was more august, more powerful, a more lasting home of empire than Athens, and probably not less beautiful. This argues that Hellenic culture can be blended with Christianity. What we may desire for ourselves is a Greek mind, and if you will, a Greek body, with a Catholic soul and a Christian heart: add thereto the judgment and the energy, the good temper and the moderation characteristic of the British Isles; and the outcome will be a noble specimen of a man.

CONFERENCE VI.

A SOCIAL IDEAL.

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost, 20 November, 1898.

ARISTOTLE devotes the first book of his *Politics* to the consideration of the family, or household. He examines briefly the relationships of husband and wife, and of parent and child, and at great length that of master and slave. As we should phrase it, this first book is taken up with 'social' rather than with 'political' questions. We are about to consider the influence of Christianity and of the Catholic Church upon 'social' life: first, upon the domestic relations of husband and wife, parent and child, and then upon the economic relation, no longer of master and slave, but of employer and workman.

The family pivots round the mother. She stays at home and makes home, while the father of the family ranges abroad and engages in public business. The effect of Christianity on the family must be measured by its effect on the position of woman, the wife and mother. Woman has held a higher position among some races than among others: higher for instance among the Teutonic races than among the Greeks and Romans. Woman enjoys a high position among the Siamese, a people yet

unconverted to Christianity. In this as in other matters, Christianity has abetted and fostered whatever good natural disposition it has found in the peoples among whom it has come. It has enforced the natural law of marriage. The unity and indissolubility of marriage are consecrated by Christ having raised the marriage contract between baptized persons to the dignity of a Sacrament. As Baptism is the entrance upon Christian life, and Holy Order upon priestly life, so is the Sacrament of Matrimony the entrance upon Christian family life; and in all three ways, once the first steps are taken, there is no turning back. They are three ways of holiness leading to eternal life. It does not detract from the height of one mountain peak to say that there is a still higher peak standing behind it: rather the height of the one is best illustrated by insisting on the great height of the other, which it overtops. And so, though the Church teaches, and every Catholic must avow, that there is a state which, as such, is higher and holier than the married state, this doctrine tends to exalt the dignity and sanctity of holy Matrimony. The best ecclesiastical and religious vocations are drawn from families whose members are intensely fond of one another, parents of children and children of parents, families where brothers and sisters live and love as though time and destiny were never to drag them asunder and separate them in different walks of life. The reason is patent: these are the best Christian families; and God loves to ask sacrifices of His best friends. No one would set much store by that vocation which

was inspired by a desire to escape from a wrangling, factious, and unhappy home.

When a woman abdicates the joys and the privilege of motherhood by retiring into a convent, God will often give her a participation of the dignity which she has renounced, by making her the educator of the Christian mothers that are to be in the next generation. All human institutions are open to criticism, and benefit by the process. Nothing is perfect that in any way depends for its success upon human effort. Fault-finding and fault-correcting is our only progress. Our Convent schools are much criticised; and they are making great and costly efforts to better themselves. But they have done a great work. Many a husband and many a son is indebted to them more than he will ever repay, for fostering, rearing, and forming to a Christian standard the woman who has been the treasure of his life.

There is another Christian Sacrament besides Matrimony that has some bearing upon the happiness of the family. It is the Sacrament of Penance. There is a strong Protestant prejudice on this score. The priest in the confessional is supposed to be a sower of discord between husband and wife. The question is one of fact, and must be settled by testimony. I believe I am right in saying that the confessor would often be glad to have the husband present, and let the man hear with his own ears how much is done in the confessional to pacify his wife and render her obedient in all things lawful to her earthly lord.

The treatment of this subject would be very incomplete, did I not say a word of her who is the type of Christian womanhood, and, after her Divine Son, the chiefest object of Catholic veneration and love, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Absolutely, Our Saviour might have redeemed us, and instituted His Church, and led us to salvation, leaving His Mother unhonoured and unknown. Absolutely, yon College Chapel might stand and serve its purpose, shorn of its turrets and pinnacles. But it would not be the Chapel which now it is. Its essence would remain, but the beauty of its entirety and perfection would be lost. The worship of Mary, the Mother of God, belongs to the integral perfection of Catholic Christianity. Her image, whether graven exteriorly, or, still better, inwardly impressed upon our imaginations and hearts, is something which, once known, for our soul's health we can never consent to forego. In particular, Christian Catholic woman, the wife, the mother, has been ennobled and spiritualised by the type of Mary.

I turn to that other social relationship, the economic relation of employer and employed. There is a celebrated Encyclical of Leo XIII., 15 May, 1891, on the Condition of the Working Classes. In *The Month* for May last (1898) I drew out eight 'Principles' embodied in this Encyclical. I would call attention now to the sixth and eighth. The sixth Principle is enunciated thus: "Wages must be sufficient to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort." This Principle has found vogue in England under the name of the "Principle

of the life-wage," and has been generally approved and accepted, and (apart from the "sweating-system") fairly well acted up to by British employers of labour. It refers to men whose labour is taken up by one employer for the entire day. And the proof of it is this: A man must live: this man can only live by the wages of his work: therefore whoever hires all his labour and working power must pay him wages enough to live upon. Further, as His Holiness quotes from St. Thomas, "no man ought to live unbecomingly." Therefore the wages paid ought to be enough to enable the workman to live in such comfort as becomes his state and condition: now it becomes no state and condition of mankind to linger on the verge of starvation. This is illustrated by the condition of labour which Aristotle contemplated, I mean slavery. A master was morally bound to feed his slave, and keep him strong and healthy. He had no moral right to possess more slaves than he was able to feed. So if an employer cannot afford to pay the life-wage, he must cease to employ labour. This is said for a normal condition of society, not for that abnormal state of things in which starvation stares in at every door: then master and man are fain together to suffer the pinch of want.

All these are purely rational considerations: they do not rise to the supernatural. But I wish to show how the supernatural principles of Christianity, personified in the Pope, go to the support of our natural social relations. The other Principle, the eighth, I fear is rather ideal and admirable in itself

than likely soon to be acted upon, at least in this country. It is that the medieval Gilds should be restored, those mercantile associations of which employers and workmen alike were members, instead of the rival combinations of masters on the one hand and men on the other, watching one another, as the great nations of the world do in our present armed peace. These Gilds used to exist on a religious basis, and perhaps in a Catholic country they might be restored on the same.

I have tried to put before you to-day the Catholic and Christian ideal working socially,—the ideal of womanhood, represented by our Blessed Lady, in the family, and the ideal of brotherhood between employer and employed, as we are all brothers in His fraternity, *where there is not Greek and Jew, barbarian and Scythian, bondsman and free, but all things and in all Christ* (Col. iii. 11).

CONFERENCE VII.

THE LIKENESS OF THE SON OF MAN.

First Sunday of Advent, 27 November, 1898.

THIS first Sunday of Advent is the first day of the Church's liturgical year. As the natural year is waning, the Church enters upon a season of spring. For Advent is a spring-time, not devoid of austerity, as spring also has its asperities and its crisp, piercing airs,—still redolent of joy and glad expectation, "because He cometh." In a sense the whole history of the Church is one long Advent, beginning with the birth of Christ and completed in His coming at the last day of general resurrection and judgment. The term and purpose of Advent is nowhere better expressed than in the prayer, called the Secret, at the Christmas midnight Mass, *in illius inveniamur forma, in quo tecum est nostra substantia*. The terminology is scholastic: therefore the word *form* does not mean mere outward contour: *form* is that which penetrates a being through and through, and constitutes its character, special excellence, worth, and rank. We then are to be in the *form* of Christ, as in Christ the *substance* of our humanity, a human body and soul, is united with the Godhead. This is the mystery of Christianity,

the prayer of the priest at the altar in the solemn hour of high festival, "that we may be found in His form, in whom with Thee is our substance." This is "the likeness of the Son of Man" of which I wish to speak to you to-day.

I am glad in this place to acknowledge my indebtedness to the learning of a great Cambridge scholar, Bishop Westcott. In a note at the end of the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, in *The Speaker's Commentary*, the Bishop gives the history of the designation, *the Son of Man*. Eighty times in the four gospels Our Lord applies the designation to Himself. No other lips but His own ever apply it to Him, except that Stephen in the moment of his martyrdom cries out: *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God* (Acts, vii. 56): and the Jews once, in indignation and surprise, taking up Our Lord's words, ask *Who is this the Son of Man?* (John, xii. 34). The phrase is found in the Old Testament, always without the definite article, which in the New Testament is never absent, except in Apoc. i. 13, where *one like a son of man* is copied from Daniel, vii. 13. *Son of man* does not appear to have been a recognised name of the Messiah, till Our Lord took it up. In the Psalms we read, *sons of men* (iv. 3; lxxxix. 3; cvi. 8), which means merely 'men,' as 'sons of Achaeans' in Homer, and 'sons of physicians,' mean 'Achaeans,' 'physicians.' The prophet Ezechiel is addressed as *son of man* some ninety times over by the Lord who inspired him, reminding him that he was no more than human. In

Daniel we have a remarkable text (vii. 13), *one like a son of man was coming in the clouds of heaven.* This text Our Lord twice applies to Himself and His coming in judgment, once in this day's gospel: *They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds* (Luke, xxi. 27), and again before Caiphas, vindicating to Himself as Man that Divine glory of which *the clouds of heaven* were the acknowledged symbo (Matt. xxvi. 64). *The Son of Man* means then 'the Man.' Jesus Christ was pre-eminently 'the Man,' first as being full and perfect man, as really as any of us is a man, and more entirely, inasmuch he had in Himself human nature in its highest perfection as a nature, and fullest amplitude: secondly, as being the head of our race, *the last Adam* (1 Cor. xv. 45), the chief, typical, and model Man. In that aspect we are now to consider Him.

We must observe at the outset that our Model is no Platonic ideal, no *αὐτοάνθρωπος*, no spiritual and supersensible object answering to an abstract conception of perfect humanity. Jesus Christ is an actual man. *A spirit,* He says, *hath not flesh and bones as you see me have* (Luke, xxiv. 39). He lived a human life upon this earth; and we are not left to an *a priori* construction of what that life must have been: the story of it is told in the gospels: there we see Him "in his habit, as he lived." Our imitation presupposes knowledge of the gospel history, cognisance and memory of the facts, and more than that, the realisation of those facts and representation of them to the mind's eye through the imagination. Let me dwell a little on this

important point. I wish the time allowed me to read to you a passage from Newman's sermon on *Faith and Sight*, preached before the University of Oxford, 27 May, 1832, the passage beginning with the thesis that "the world overcomes us, not merely by appealing to our reason, or exciting our passions, but by imposing on our imagination;" and ending by "taking fire," as Carlyle says, in the magnificent outburst: "The world sweeps by in long procession; its principalities and powers, its Babel of languages, the astrologers of Chaldaea, the horse and its rider and the chariots of Egypt, Baal, and Ashtoreth, and their false worship; and those who witness, feel its fascination; they flock after it; with a strange fancy, they ape its gestures, and doat over its mummeries." The burden of the passage is the danger of imagination in early life, not simply of filthy and sinful imaginations, but of the image thrown on the mind by this big world and arena of human struggles, its excitements, its interests, its glories, its vicissitudes, all the impetuous rush of life. The religion learnt in childhood comes by contrast to appear a childish invention, pretty indeed, but petty, quite inadequate to measure the magnitude of things that are and to allow for their manifold complexity. "This world is too much with us," as Wordsworth says, and its overpowering, engrossing presence thrusts the next world out of view. The visible and sensible things, which imagination bodies forth, hide away the invisible things of faith, dwarf them, and dwindle them down to bare outlines and faded shadows. This danger

is met, as the illustrious writer I have quoted was fond of insisting, by the existence of the visible Church, with its sacraments, its ritual, its outward pomp, circumstance, and grandeur. "That great institution, the Catholic Church," he says, "has been set up by Divine Mercy as a present, visible antagonist, and the only possible antagonist, to sight and sense."[1]

In another way (and this is more connected with our present discourse) the worldliness of imagination is held in check by every means of representing to the senses and the imagination the life that Christ actually led on earth. The statue of the Madonna and Child, and the Crucifix, are thus most familiar and powerful aids. They banish thoughts against faith, as against other virtues. Pictures like those of Doré and Tissot, the Passion Play of Ammergau, illustrations of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, well-written Lives of Christ, and particularly 'Contemplations,' or 'Studies' of scenes of that Life, the favourite method of prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola, in which method a large part is assigned to imagination, all are helps in this cause. Imagination must be met by imagination, worldly reveries by spiritual reveries, not unfounded on historic reality. We need to bring home to our understanding and innermost heart that there once walked in the fields a peasant Child, who could raise His eyes to the stars of heaven and say, 'Those are My handiwork, those are Mine: I call them all by their names, and

[1] Lecture on *Christianity and Medical Science.*

they obey Me as their Master.' *Who is this, for the winds and the sea obey him?* (Luke, viii. 25).

We must not however rest content with imagining to ourselves the human life of Christ: we must pass on to imitation. Next to the New Testament, the *Imitation of Christ* is the most Christian book ever written: it grasps in its very title the central idea of Christianity. There is an *ascetic* imitation of Christ, which is our duty; and a *theological* imitation of Him, which is our privilege: this duty and this privilege are inseparable. "Their souls aglow with a divine ardour," says Plato of certain votaries, "they borrow of their God his ways and practices, so far as it is possible for man to participate with God" (*Phædrus*, 253 A). Those words may describe for us the ascetic imitation of Christ. We are to take up His ways and practices, and be something of the manner of man that He was. Such a vocation may well alarm us. Was He not the *man of sorrows* (Isai. liii. 5)? Had He not a special mission of expiation for the sin of the world? Is our life to culminate in scourging and crucifixion? Surely we should count the cost before we aspire to be imitators of Christ. We should indeed: Christ Himself advises us to count the cost (Luke, xiv. 28). But none of us need fear being called upon for a perfect imitation of his Saviour. One mortal only has in any way approached this perfect imitation: that was His Blessed and Immaculate Mother. The great Saints have come nearer Him in action, love, and suffering, than we shall ever come. It is not given to any and every one who wills it to turn

himself into a St. Philip Neri or a St. Aloysius. We can be saints only so far as grace is given us; and grace is unequally distributed. The Church is one body with many members, some more honourable, others more feeble. Read 1 Cor. xii. 4—27. It is not given to the members to interchange offices. The foot cannot become the hand, nor the mouth the eye. Christ has a special office, as the Head. We too have our special functions, each his own, in the Body of Christ; and each must discharge his function, not without his own proper pain and labour, for which his own proper grace will be given him, in union with and in imitation of the Head.

The distribution of grace is a mystery. Grace is ever gratuitous, and no excellence of nature can call down and exact in justice any grace of God. Still grace is superimposed upon nature, and some regard seems to be had to nature in the distribution of grace. We have to sanctify our several natures, and work out our salvation in our several environments. In nature there are no duplicates. No two men have quite the same natural character, or live in quite the same environment. It belongs to the royal and divine excellence of Jesus Christ, that He is the model of all Christian men, of every age, character, nature, and condition, like a jewel with infinite facets. Each of us must copy Him according to the facet, or facets, presented for our particular imitation. We can never hope to resemble Him under all His aspects. There are aspects which He presents to our neighbour to copy, and not to us. Those aspects we cannot copy. Thus,

though we all hold the same dogmatic faith, which is the faith of the Catholic Church, and all hope for the vision of one God in heaven, and all love the same heavenly Father, and are bound by the same commandments, and receive the same sacraments, yet faith, hope, and charity, and sacramental graces bear different fruit in different hearts, and the yoke of the commandments presses on no two of us with quite the same form of pressure; we have each of us his own special difficulties in being charitable, just, pure, constant and brave in our Christian profession.

Here is the solution of a difficulty which many of us have often felt. 'My neighbour *Z* is a wonderfully pious person; I should like to be a good Catholic; only I can never be like *Z*; there is a whole alphabet of difference between his nature and mine.' The answer is simply this: 'No one asks you to be like *Z*; it would be quite a mistake to try to copy him; he is not your model; look up to Jesus Christ, and make yourself the best copy of Jesus Christ possible in your own natural character, in your own position, and with the graces given to you individually.'

One word on the saying of St. Peter: *Christ hath suffered for you, leaving you an example to follow in his footsteps* (1 Pet. ii. 21). We have not such capacities of heart and soul to suffer as Christ our Saviour had. We have not a guilty world to redeem. Our Lord allows us abundance of enjoyments of which He would hardly taste Himself. But it is in the nature of things that, with advancing years, capacity

of enjoyment decreases, objects of love are lost, pains multiply; in fact we are gradually weaned from the world, and cease to love that from which we are presently to be taken away. In this downward path of decay and trial, a descent in some lives more gentle, in others abrupt, Christ with His Cross goes before us, and we follow Him in the way of the Cross *pro modulo nostro.*

On the *theological* imitation of Christ, which is our privilege, a few words must suffice; the time is short, and the subject high for our understanding. The imitation I speak of is the assimilation and quasi-identification of the Christian man, living in faith and charity, with the Word made flesh, as the member is assimilated to and in a manner identified with the head of the body to which it belongs. I quote some words which I once used elsewhere.[1]

Our union with Jesus Christ is not hypostatic, we are not one person with Him. But it is a union of that closeness which ranks next to hypostatic union. . . . We may consider some of the texts of the New Testament in which this union is described—remembering that these texts mean exactly what is said in them, that they are not to be explained away, or 'the meaning got out of them,' in the sense of their being sucked dry of all meaning that any one need care to attend to. . . . St. Paul then says to the Corinthians, ordinary Christians enough, full of faults . . .: *Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?* (1 Cor. vi. 15). . . . And to the Ephesians: *We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones* (Eph. v. 30). And again to the same: *hath made him head over all the church, which is*

[1] At Oxford, pp. 27, 28.

his body, the fulness of him (Eph. i. 23). The word πλήρωμα, translated *fulness*, means of course *complement:* it is used of a ship's *complement*, or *crew*, without which the vessel is incomplete. So Christ, the Head of the Church, is incomplete without the Church, His Body: "for if He is the Head, we the members, the whole man is He and we," says St. Augustine (tr. 21 in Joan.). The same is the signification of our Lord's own words: *I am the vine, you the branches* (John, xiv. 1—8).

The Catechism tells us that our natural likeness to God is not in our body but in our soul. The theological likeness to God made man, of which I speak, is indeed in our soul, but it is more important for us to observe and cherish it in our body; for our bodies are assimilated to His Blessed Body, and that even before our resurrection to glory. Such is the teaching of St. Paul (Rom. vi. 3—13). Such is the meaning of the axiom of the Fathers, *corpus baptizati caro crucifixi*, "the body of the baptized man is flesh of the Crucified."

I once heard a Cambridge Master describe Greek poetry as "one long wail." In a book I have just been reading, *Religion in Greek Literature*, by Professor Lewis Campbell, I seem to catch the tones of that wail, growing shriller, more distinct and passionate as religion decays in that gifted people, and mere blind sensual secularism sets in, till we come to such a verse as this in the Anthology:

> πάντα κόνις καὶ πάντα τέφρα καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν,
> All is dust, and ashes all, and all is nothingness.

New life and new hope was come when St. John Chrysostom addressed a Greek audience with the words: "Through this Body I am no longer dust and ashes."[1] Therefore I have called Advent the spring-time of the Christian year, as it heralds the consummation of our Lord's coming among us, the fulfilment of our Christmas prayer, *in illius inveniamur forma, in quo tecum est nostra substantia.*

[1] διὰ τοῦτο τὸ σῶμα οὐκέτι γῆ καὶ σποδὸς ἐγώ. Hom. 24 in 1 Cor.

CONFERENCE VIII.

FINAL REALISATION.

Second Sunday of Advent, 4 December, 1898.

"If a man were adopted heir to Cæsar, he would despise the present, and be wholly at Court in his father's eye, and his desires would outrun his swiftest speed, and all his thoughts would spend themselves in creating ideas and little fantastick images of his future condition" (Jeremy Taylor, *Holy Living*, chap. iv.). We are about to try to create some "idea and little fantastick image" of our future condition, in which the ideal of the Christian man will by the mercy of God be finally realised in us. You would be unlike other persons of your age, if the next world did not seem to you very far off, so far that you barely discern it at the end of a long avenue of life. And yet you know that it is there, and that you are started on a journey which will surely bring you to it at last. We should count a traveller an idiot, who did not know or care where he was bound for. The care of the next world makes us care for religion.

Every baptized man is adopted heir to God. Baptism sets his foot on the threshold of God's kingdom, and gives him a right and title to those

riches, which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive* (Isaias, lxiv. 4, quoted 1 Cor. ii. 9). This is not said of the place of punishment, nor is there any authority for applying it to that place. Probably we have a pretty accurate notion of what hell is, surely no place to go to. Nor can we say that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive what would be enough to make man, in a natural way, perfectly happy. See whether this sketch be not fairly adequate. We shall have to put the happiness after death, or else it will not be perpetual; for the body, as we know it, must decay. Naturally, I think, we should part with the body and be done with it for ever. It is a moot point, but no probability of resurrection in the natural order has ever come home to my understanding. The soul, the everlasting element in man, secures the two components of happiness, interest and love. There is interest enough in creation, if our soul may be permitted to roam about and pry into all the secrets of the physical universe, to search and discover everywhere, with a deathless energy, never flagging under the labour. There is love in the company of other souls. Happiness is necessarily a social happiness: we shall never be happy in solitude and isolation: of that we may rest assured, whatever happiness we attain to. Given immortality, unfailing energy, abundant occupation and interest, loving companionship of friends,—add to these gifts perpetual security against pain and sorrow—add above all the consciousness of being in favour with

God, and the glorious worship of Him, our Lord and Benefactor, as knowable under the veil of creation, and it is hard to say what shall be wanting to the natural measure of our happiness. It would be strange indeed if our rational souls, whose end is happiness, were incapable of conceiving what was requisite to make them happy.

All these elements of good are present in the final consummation of the supernatural order, in the Christian heaven; but they are present after a mode and manner of excellence utterly beyond our imagination and comprehension. The happiness of heaven is not merely human, but divine; it is at once divine and human, as the Blessed are made in the likeness of *the Son of Man, standing at the right hand of God* (Acts, vii. 56). I call it a divine happiness: so St. Thomas Aquinas says, "they enjoy the same happiness wherewith God Himself is happy" (*Contra gent.* iii. 51). How that can be, we will consider presently. Meanwhile, as God is incomprehensible, so is His happiness: so too is the happiness of the Blessed who share therein. Imagine every horror you can, and call that hell, and you may easily outrun the bounds of a sound and safe theology: but when you want to picture heaven, give the reins to your imagination, you can never come near the reality: the reality is all that and endless more; only see you never imagine aught but what is good and holy and pure. Whatever good you can think of will be there, as divines say, "eminently and in a better way," as the circuit of a real citadel excels the sand fortresses of children

on the seashore. The delights of heaven transcend the horrors of hell; in fact the poignant agony of hell is precisely the thought of the eternal forfeiture of heaven through one's own fault. The serpent lied when he said, *ye shall be as gods* (Gen. iii. 5); but *faithful and true* are the *sayings* of Our Saviour, who has vanquished *the old serpent*, and makes us the same promise (Apoc. iii. 21; xii. 9; xxii. 6).

I call it a 'human happiness,' because it includes all the elements of natural happiness, and further, because it beatifies the whole man, body and soul. You are aware that a disembodied spirit, however happy, is not a man: St. Peter, St. Andrew, St. John, are men no more. The body is an essential component of human nature. The resurrection of the body is one of the promises of Christ. We owe it to the merits of Christ that our bodies are to rise in glory. I cannot tell you what a glorified body will be like: I can only refer to the accounts of the Body of Christ after His resurrection, and say that our glorified bodies will be like that (Phil. iii. 21; cf. Matt. xiii. 43; xvii. 2; Luke, xx. 36). We have moments of exuberant health, in which we feel what a glorious thing perfect human nature is, if only it could be kept at its best. There are some strange lines in a choral ode of Euripides (*Hercules Furens*, 637): "If gods had discernment and wisdom after the notion of men, there would be a second youth given as a prize, a clear mark of virtue, for those who had spent their first youth well." This is exactly what we are promised in the resurrection. We do not make enough of the resurrection of the body.

The thought is a grand incentive to the virtue that we most need,—a peculiar flower of the Incarnation. I venture to say to you: 'Take care of the body, and the soul will take care of itself.' You understand, I speak in no epicurean sense: I mean, govern the body, sanctify it, according to the law and with the grace of Christ, conform it to His sacred Flesh, and you will save both soul and body.

I have heard of a good Catholic mother repeating on her death-bed, "I want to go and see God." That I call 'a divine happiness.' St. Thomas calls it "the happiness wherewith God himself is happy," to see God. I quote the whole passage to which I referred before: it illustrates such sayings as *then face to face* (1 Cor. xiii. 12): *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is* (1 John, iii. 2). St. Thomas then writes:

> We shall see God face to face, because we shall have an immediate vision of Him, as of a man whom we see face to face. By this vision we are most of all made like to God, and are partakers in His happiness, for this is His happiness, that He understands Himself. They therefore *eat and drink at the table* of God (Luke, xxii. 30), who enjoy the same happiness wherewith God is happy, seeing Him in the way in which He sees Himself (*Contra gent.* iii. 51).

Only he into whose heart it has entered to conceive what God is, can conceive what the sight of God is. Shows and sights draw men in crowds. Through the eyes we admire, through the eyes we love; and as we love, we still desire to see. There are as many loves as there are sights: there is the

sight of the eye, most precious of all our senses, and the sight of the understanding, more precious still. Man's happiness is in some vision of the understanding. Vision awakens love; and love awakened, as I have said, cries for vision. *Domine, ut videam.* To say that God is more admirable, more lovely, more beautiful, better than all creation, is poor praise. But that is enough to give us an inkling of what the sight of God must be. We are familiar from childhood with the phrase 'to see God.' Perhaps it has never come home to us, how much that simple phrase, taken in its literal and proper meaning, signifies. To be *invisible* is one of the grand attributes of Deity, not as an angel, or the object of an abstract idea, is invisible to the bodily eye, but to be invisible to the highest angel by any exertion of mere angelic faculties. Only God of His own nature is capable of seeing God. God could not create a creature exalted enough to have a natural capacity for seeing Him. As theologians put it: *videre Deum est supra capacitatem naturalem omnis creaturæ creabilis.* The gratuitous gift of sanctifying grace, God's best gift to any mere creature, that gift alone qualifies angel or saint to see God. Such was the gift poured out on Mary in the first instant of her human existence, according to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception; thanks to that gift, and the augmentation of it throughout her life, she sees her Divine Son in the glory of His Godhead now. The same is the gift bestowed on us in Baptism, and in all the Sacraments.

There is not one heaven for the Blessed Virgin

and the Apostles, and another for us. We are to have the entry and the free range of our one Father's house. It is the home of the canonised Saints, and also our home. We are to enjoy all the rights of sons there. Other sons will be better and dearer, and see their Father with a clearer vision; but we shall look upon the same face and be caught up in the same fatherly arms. *Gloria haec est omnibus sanctis ejus.*

These must be some proportion between the means of salvation and the end and consummation of salvation: a mighty end needs to be worked out by mighty means. Therefore are the Sacraments wonderful, and most of all the Blessed Sacrament; they have to do a great work in raising mortals like ourselves to the society of the Holy Trinity and to the foot of God's throne. No wonder if terms of access seem high, no wonder if grace exacts fidelity, no wonder if faith transcends imagination. No wonder if the Church of God on earth carries a burden of high mysteries, of grave responsibilities, and imperious claims. A petty, foot-rule-measured religion can never be the code of the kingdom of heaven.

Two thoughts have arisen in my mind in treating of this high subject. I put them as difficulties. I imagine one of you saying: 'No doubt, heaven is a grand place; but I would willingly forego some of its final grandeur if the road thither were made smoother, wider, more frequented, and less dark. At present we are told it is a *narrow way, and few there are that find it* (Matt. vii. 14); and it is lit only

by the lamp of faith, *as of a light shining in a dark place*' (2 Pet. i. 19). This is one difficulty. Then some one else chimes in: 'The difficulty just stated is mine also, and furthermore: I am dissatisfied with the view of heaven; I do not want profound peace and entire rest; I can never be happy without some conflict, struggle, and active exertion.'

Let us give the priority to the second difficulty. As I have said, many good things will be found in heaven 'eminently and in a more excellent way,' not formally and precisely as they are on earth, because that would involve some undesirable concomitant. With this reserve, I say that there certainly shall be a struggle and active exertion in heaven. That is involved in the essential idea of heaven, which is seeing God. We read in Genesis, xxxii. 24, sq. how Jacob wrestled with an angel, representing God. To see God is spiritually to wrestle with God, inasmuch as all the energy and activity of the soul is called out by that sight, and spent upon God, against whom it can never prevail, because God is infinite, and therefore, how clearly soever we see Him, we can never comprehend or exhaust Him. The sight of God then is a never-ending activity, and at the same time a rest and a repose, because it satisfies us, because it never cloys or wearies us, and because we have no mind ever to turn away from Him.

The text on the *narrow way* might occupy a whole Conference.[1] All that I can say now is that

[1] See above, pp. 17—25.

God is our Father and our Lord. As Father, He has magnificent designs for our establishment in life everlasting, in a position of dignity befitting sons of His. Those designs can only be worked out by a series of costly efforts on our part. It would be foolish of us to spoil any part of that magnificence by cowardice about the way leading thereto. Yet this is what we actually are doing by our cowardice in Christian life, and our falling short of the graces given to us, each in his own place in the Church. In our childish days we resented being sent to school, and being made to work when we got there. We were willing enough to forego the advantages of a liberal education. But our parents and teachers knew our true interest better, and insisted on making men of us even in spite of ourselves. Our Father in heaven insists on making us Saints, uncanonised probably and uncanonisable, but still Saints; there are none in heaven who are not of the number of *All Saints*.

God is also our Lord. He has created us for His praise and glory, to be worked out according to His own masterful will, to which as creatures we are bound to submit. That glory has two parts: part the first, our "labours, agony and passion, cross and dereliction, faintness and weariness, death and burial"; part the second, our "resurrection, ascension, joys, glory." You see I take the words from the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus. These two parts together made up the portion of God's Divine Son made man. The second part is a multiple of the first; it is multiplied ten thousand fold; still to

diminish the one would be proportionally to diminish the other. We must give glory to God our Lord according to the full measure that He has appointed, both of our temporal labours and of our eternal happiness.

CAMBRIDGE LENT AND MAY TERMS, 1899.

CONFERENCE IX.

HOW A MAN SHOULD PROVE HIMSELF.

Third Sunday after Epiphany, 22 January, 1899.

THERE was once a French Abbé preaching before the Emperor Napoleon III. and his Court. Instead of high argument and rhetoric, the preacher delivered a sort of catechetical lecture, a plain exposition of elementary truths. This diet was not to the taste of the courtiers, but the Emperor had the good sense to say: "Quite right, M. l'Abbé, we are very ignorant, instruct us." I should be sorry to put you at all in the same category with the Court of the Second Empire. Yet even you are better for hearing plain expositions of catechism at times, for this reason, that the same truth is differently appreciated by a child and by a grown-up person. If I may

venture on a philosophical term, the 'perception' is the same in both, but the 'apperception' is different —apperception differing from perception much as finding books a place on your shelves differs from simply having them delivered at your door. The same truth is introduced into different surroundings in the mind of a man and in the mind of a child. It is necessary that you come to take a man's view of the simple truths of religion that you learnt in childhood: therefore you need to have those truths reproposed for your consideration. I am going to put before you to-day matter that is, and ought to be, taught to children, matter, at the same time, of capital importance to salvation, matter which no man should disdain to hear and con over.

The expression 'prove himself' is from St. Paul: *Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice* (1 Cor. xi. 20). On which text the Council of Trent supplies this comment: "Ecclesiastical custom declares that such proving of oneself is necessary, that no man, conscious to himself of mortal sin, however contrite he may think himself, must presume to approach the Holy Eucharist without previous sacramental confession" (Sess. xiii. cap. 7). To 'prove oneself' then means, not only to examine one's conscience and find out if there be any mortal sin upon it, but also, if such sin be found, to take effectual measures for removing the same, else the discovery of it is useless. There is no use discovering that a copy of verses, for which you are responsible, won't scan, unless you apply a correction and make them scan.

We are engaged with the practical subject of the discovery and removal of mortal sin.

The discovery is not difficult. A man can hardly be very ill without knowing it. A Christian man who earnestly desires to serve God, who makes a point of religion and sets it at the head of all his concerns, cannot go and give God mortal offence, and be all unaware of what he has done. So rational theologians teach. So St. Teresa records as said to her by our Lord: "No one loses Me without clearly seeing it." That is, no man who looks to see God, and has the fear of God before his eyes, hurtles against God as it were in the dark, and breaks away from Him unconsciously. There are spiritual writers who describe a soul coming to be beset with mortal sins, and not recognising them as such: these writers either have in view a soul that has quite broken away from God and become reckless, not the soul that we are speaking of, or they write under the influence of Jansenism, and are not to be believed.

To a mortal sin is required a grave obligation, revealed by conscience, violated with full consent.

(1) 'A grave obligation' implies a grave precept in a grave matter. It supposes God commanding to the full extent of His authority over us. For lack of this condition, a lie that hurts no man, nor prejudices religion, is a sin, but not a mortal sin; say the same of a small theft, or a slight quarrel. These are not mortal sins, and yet are things to avoid, as we avoid bodily ailments that do not threaten our lives.

(2) The grave obligation must be 'revealed by conscience.' All sin is some disregard of conscience. Conscience in the majority of men is imperfectly enlightened, and by no means always reveals obligation according as it objectively exists. Many strange and deplorable acts may thus be excused in the doers of them from the guilt of mortal sin. God is not anxious to bring us in guilty. "God goes round about, looking for excuses to make it possible for you to escape hell."[1]

(3) Even when the obligation is known as grave, there is no mortal transgression except by 'full consent' of the will. In a mortal sin, as I once heard a good theologian say, "the whole man sins," not that there are not mortal sins of thought and desire which stop short of action (Matt. v. 28), but in such cases the man throws himself into the thought or desire, head over heels, so to speak, like a man jumping into a river, thoroughly identifying himself, for the time being, with the evil proposed, and this not by a mere movement of appetite, against which the awakened will instantly reacts, but with the approval of the awakened will. Sometimes the will reacts, and that decidedly, but only after some hesitation: then you have a venial sin. Some one may bring an article to my door for sale, which I resolutely refuse to buy, but in closing the door I glance with some half-satisfaction at what he has to offer: that is like the half-consent which makes no more than a venial sin. It is easy, as

[1] περίεισι προφάσεις ζητῶν δι' ὧν δυνήσῃ ἀπαλλαγῆναι τῆς γεέννης (St. John Chrysostom, Hom. 3 in Matt.).

I have explained, to disentangle will from appetite sufficiently to say that there has been no full consent, and consequently no mortal sin: it is not easy to say that there has been no venial sin, no matter for a 'confession of devotion.'[1]

Inasmuch as mortal sin is a renunciation of the friendship and grace of God, these words of the great moralist Cardinal de Lugo apply to it:

> Things that are in a man's full ownership cannot be forfeited without the man's full consent. When there is only half-full liberty, any consent given is not full but half-full, and therefore is not a consent but a half-consent, and that not of a man but of half a man. It is called a half-full advertence, because the man being in a sort of semisomnolent state, is not all awake, but half-awake and half-asleep, and therefore it is not the whole man that consents but half of the man, and thus the act is not altogether a human act, but a half-human act, insufficient for renunciation of ownership.[2]

The peculiar effect of mortal sin is the privation of sanctifying grace, and the coming to be in a state of damnation, liable to hell fire, the sure doom of any soul which passes out of the body by death in that state. A further incident is the incapacity to do any act meritorious of heaven. Do not misunderstand me. A person in mortal sin may multiply acts of natural virtue: he can be brave,

[1] A 'confession of devotion' is a confession of sin which you are not obliged to confess. In the Anglican view, all confessions are confessions of devotion.

[2] *De Justitia et Jure*, disp. 23, n. 21.

generous, helpful to his neighbour. Nay he can do acts of supernatural virtue too, else he could never repent, for repentance consists of supernatural acts. Those acts put him in the way of recovering the grace of God: but till grace is recovered, and the guilt of mortal sin taken away, no act is registered in heaven as a treasure stored there, equivalent to an increase of eternal glory. A man on the sick-list cannot earn wages; he can be got well, and then he will earn; but he earns nothing by going through the process of his cure in hospital. When the soul that has often sinned mortally is finally saved, all the time spent in mortal sin will be found blank, for the matter of heavenly reward—a time of *empty months and sad nights,* as Job says (vii. 3).

No mere acts of ours, however supernatural, are sufficient atonement for mortal sin. Such sin is atoned for and taken away only through the merits of our Saviour's death on the cross. But certain acts of ours are necessary as conditions to derive to us the benefit of that atonement. God cannot be expected to pardon a sinner who is in no way sorry for having offended Him. Sorrow goes before all forgiveness. You may be sorry rather on God's account than on your own, considering God's goodness; or you may be sorry rather on your own account, considering that you are in God's power. The former is the sorrow of 'perfect contrition,' the latter is 'imperfect contrition,' otherwise called 'attrition.' Attrition fears God more than it loves Him: contrition, when it is perfect, fears indeed, but loves more, and grieves that it has offended a

good Father rather than that it has provoked a severe Judge. Our Saviour's death has imparted to our 'perfect contrition' this wonderful efficacy, that it abolishes mortal sin in us; or rather, I should say, perfect contrition opens what Jeremy Taylor would call "a little window in heaven," and through the aperture, however small, the light of God's mercy and sanctifying grace pours in and floods the soul. Any grievous sin there found is immediately forgiven, though the obligation of confessing it in our next confession still remains. But we cannot be sure that our contrition is of this perfect type. That uncertainty should induce us to repeat again and again our acts of contrition; there is no holy exercise more profitable, none that becomes us better, whoever we are. It should induce us also gladly to seek the absolution which our Saviour gives us by His minister in the sacrament of Penance. There is no avail in that absolution, unless we receive it with a will at present turned away from sin and seriously bent on amendment; but it is enough if our sorrow then be of that inferior quality, called 'attrition,' a quality that God offers liberally to any sinner who will ask for it.

The point that I wish particularly to bring home to you is the instantaneousness of the removal of mortal sin, whether by an act of perfect contrition, or by attrition joined with sacramental absolution. Mortal sin comes in an instant, and in an instant it is gone. A long course of events lead up to its coming or removal, but the consummation in either

case is instantaneous. So is death instantaneous, and the capsizing of a boat, and a declaration of war, and on the other hand the signing of a treaty of peace, or—better example still—the switching on or off of the electric light. I urge this, because the contrary view is common among our Anglican friends. Many of them speak as though they thought that God's love or anger rested on us according to the balance of our good and evil deeds, one against the other. Were this so, clearly there would be no chance of salvation for a dying man, who had led a life of sin and had only half an hour to live. Thus Jeremy Taylor:

He that resolves to live well when a danger is upon him, or a violent fear, or when the appetites of lust are newly satisfied, or newly served, and yet when the temptation comes again, sins again, and then is sorrowful, and resolves once more against it, and yet falls when the temptation returns, is a vain man, but no true penitent, nor in the state of grace; and if he chance to die in one of these good moods, is very far from salvation. . . . No man is to reckon his pardon immediately upon his returns from sin to the beginnings of a good life, but is to begin his hopes and degrees of confidence according as sin dies in him and grace lives;[1] as the habits of sin lessen, and righteousness grows; according as sin returns but seldom, &c., &c. . . . As we return to God, so God returns to us, and our state returns to the probabilities of pardon. . . . God

[1] Actual or sanctifying grace? The presence of the smallest degree of sanctifying grace in the soul means that all guilt of mortal sin is gone.

pardons our sins by parts. . . . Remember always, that after a great sin or a habit of sins, a man is not soon made clean.[1]

When Jeremy Taylor wrote, Jansenism was just springing up in France. His principles are exactly those of the Jansenist directors, who instead of obeying their Master's command, *Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him* (Luke xv. 22), sent the poor prodigal to do penance on a distant farm, refusing him absolution till all his bad habits were extirpated. These rigorists knew not the Heart of their Master, nor the impetuous might of His sanctifying grace, nor the efficacy of His sacramental absolution. Besides, their psychology was at fault. They did not attend to the difference between act and habit: how a habit of sin is not itself a sin, every sin being some act: how the will may have gone back upon a past sinful act, and now be averted and turned away from it and pointed in another direction, and still be apt (through the abiding force of habit) to veer round, and undergo reversion, and sin again. They did not observe that God's merciful grace seizes the moment when this fickle weathercock of a will is at present pointing away from sin, and that the same is the moment for God's minister to seize and impart the benefit of absolution to the penitent while he is capable of it. If he sins again, as, likely enough, he will,—for absolution and justification does not kill on the

[1] Taylor's *Holy Living*, ch. iv. sect. ix. *Acts and parts of repentance*, nn. 7, 8: sect. x. n. 4.

spot the evil habit,—well, let him repent again, and make his act of perfect contrition as soon as he can: let him even with attrition confess and be once more absolved. The habit will die of sacraments. That is our Lord's treatment. As in other medical treatment, a present crisis is averted; and in time, only in time, the liability to the return of the crisis will cease. Not merely each particular sin will be pardoned, but the habit itself will be gone.

Here then I lay down for you the one great rule of spiritual life, not a rule of high perfection, but of primary importance and sufficiency for salvation: LIVE IN THE GRACE OF GOD. I trust you do know the happiness which the observance of that rule carries with it even in this life. You know how well it stands with the discharge of the duties, with the enjoyment also of the amusements, proper to your state. It simply forbids you evil and folly, things that you are the worse for yielding to. Allow me to end with a mathematical illustration. The life of one who lives all the year round in the state of grace, may be likened to a circle. One who breaks away from God by mortal sin and does not return, may be said to fly off at a tangent. One who sins mortally, but repents at times, describes a sort of polygon; an irregular polygon with large sides, if his delays in sin are protracted, and his repentances recur only at fitful intervals. But observe what happens, if, however frequently a person falls into mortal sin, he always returns to God immediately the fit is off him. He is always

flying off at small tangents, but then back he comes directly. His course may be represented by a regular polygon, with many small sides. You know what happens to such a polygon 'in the limit.' As the sides grow indefinitely numerous and indefinitely small, the polygon passes into a circle. So in the limit, a limit too that will be quickly reached, he soul that repents of mortal sin promptly and perseveringly, will come to live in the grace of God permanently.

CONFERENCE X.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS.

Septuagesima Sunday, 29 January, 1899.

COMMENTING on the promise, *He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and fire* (Matt. iii. 11), St. John Chrysostom writes: "The Lamb had to be slain, and the sin taken away, and the enmity appeased, and the burial to take place and the resurrection, and then the Holy Ghost was to come." I have said much of sanctifying grace, the gift of the Holy Ghost; much, I hope, to console you in the thought of the grandeur of the ideal of the Christian man. But I cannot forget the text: *Wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul that worketh iniquity, of the Jew first and of the Greek* (Rom. ii. 7, 8), of the Christian first and of the heathen. I cannot shut my eyes, nor can you, to the terrible prevalence of sin upon this earth. We need no revelation to assure us of that. We have revelation to assure us how this torrent of iniquity took its source in the original trangression of our first parent. And how shall this *besetting sin* (Heb. xii. 1) be taken away? For unless it is taken away, the ideal of the Christian man can never be realised. It is taken

away by the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, and by that alone.

Every sin leads, in the order of nature and divine justice, to a proportionate degree of suffering. 'Sin and suffer for it': it is an intuition of the human race, one of those intuitions that philosophy cannot set aside, because they are more valid and convincing than any philosophy. Disease too means suffering, and is often cured by some painful operation: but the pain there is no part of the cure, and it is the glory of modern science to operate without pain. But pain is essential to the cure of sin. Pain itself is medicine to the sinner. Of the medicinal working of punishment, in some small degree, we have all had experience in our own persons. It might seem impossible for any pain to be medicinal and remedial of sin, except it be borne and felt by the sinner himself. You must take your own medicine. Ordinarily this rule holds: yet we know of one case in which the pain suffered by another has been medicinal to us, and cured us of the evil propensities born of our sins. I mean that we have often been converted and turned away from our sin by the thought of Christ's Passion. However, it is not the medicinal working of pain and punishment that we are now mainly concerned to observe.

The primary purpose of punishment is expiation. Punishment is retrospective. Punishment is vengeance, the vengeance of the law and of the Lord. I more than admit, I would strongly urge in its due place, the principle that the measures of human punishment are to be taken, not from vengeance,

but from the hope of amending the offender, or warning the community by the example made of him. Within those limits human punishment is vindictive; beyond them punishment must be left to Him who says, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay* (Deut. xxxii. 35). I need not add that private vengeance is forbidden us. The only vengeance allowable for us to enjoy is the vengeance of the law, and that on public grounds. The magistrate *beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil* (Rom. xiii. 4). If such a crime had been committed in this country as was committed in Switzerland some months ago, there would have been general satisfaction in the murderer undergoing the utmost rigour of the law, not for his private amendment, nor merely for the deterring of others, but principally as an atonement to public justice and to outraged majesty. There is such a thing as righteous vengeance. I say this, because there are those who —on theological grounds I imagine, and for apprehension of certain conclusions thence deducible in eschatology—wish to brand the whole idea of vengeance, whether in this world or the next, as immoral. It is not so.

If sin must be expiated by suffering, and God will execute His vengeance upon every sinner, the world stands in some considerable danger. By our sins we are all deep in God's debt. It ought to interest us to know whether God is willing to abate any of His wrath, or whether He will insist on punishing every sin to the full extent of what the

sin deserves and of what the sinner is able to pay in suffering. Philosophy cannot answer this question. Philosophy argues from *a priori* necessities, as does geometry. There is no *a priori* necessity of God forgiving any sin. He may exact His due of vengeance even to *the last farthing* (Matt. v. 26). Happily for us, on the other hand, there is no necessity either of God's denying pardon to the sinner: although great philosophers have argued such a necessity, deeming it an outrage upon natural right if any sin, once committed, have not final quittance in the full punishment of the sinner. Whether God will grant or refuse pardon, and if He will pardon, upon what terms, depends upon His free will, which we can only know by His telling us, that is, by divine revelation. Apart from revelation we may discern thus much, that there can be no pardon anyhow without the sinner going back upon his evil deed and being sorry for it. Pardon and impenitence cannot meet and agree. But sorrow is far enough from atonement for a grave offence, such as treason, treachery, the wanton destruction of a treasure of beauty and loveliness. The miscreant is sorry, that is the least he can do, to be sorry; but the law and he are not quits for all that. We must gather from revelation what further satisfaction, besides our sorrow, God will require for our sin, short of our fearful and condign punishment.

God is ready to pardon the penitent; and God will finally punish the impenitent sinner. These two facts make up, I may say, the warp and the woof of the whole texture of revelation contained in the

Bible, from Gen. iii. 9 to Apoc. xxii. 14, 15. A little closer search into the sacred page, and we come upon this fact, that God will often grant pardon, or at least respite, to the sinner, in consideration of the deserts of some good man with whom the sinner is connected. Thus He would have spared Sodom, could ten just men have been found in the city (Gen. xviii. 23—32). *For David my servant's sake*, He would not take away the kingdom wholly from sinful Solomon and his posterity (3 Kings xi. 31—39; Ps. cxxxi. 10). We have here the idea of vicarious goodness, that is, of a sinner finding mercy thanks to the goodness of some good man with whom he is connected, whose interests are bound up with his, so the innocent would in some manner suffer if the guilty were punished. Now let us further suppose that the goodness put forward to screen the sinner is no cheap quality of virtue, practised without effort, but has been costly, toilsome, painful, and so heroic. Of this quality was David's goodness, according to the verse: *Remember, O Lord, David and all his meekness* (Ps. cxxxi. 1), where the Anglican version has from the Hebrew, *and all his afflictions*, the meaning in fact being *his meekness under afflictions*. Vicarious goodness and suffering combined, or vicarious suffering for goodness' sake, or in a manner vicarious martyrdom, is a plea of twofold potency to obtain respite for the sinner, and time to repent, and final pardon, if he will repent.

From vicarious martyrdom the transition is not far to sacrifice. Clearly it will never do for the sinner to seize upon an innocent person, and kill

him in substitution for himself: that were not sacrifice, but murder. Nor must the sinner kill himself: that would be suicide. It remains to take the life of some blameless animal, some creature perfect of its kind, without physical blemish, and offer that to God in lieu of your own life, in conjunction with your own penitential tears. That is a sacrifice. It would lead me too far afield to trace the history of sacrifice in the ancient world. I appeal to your own memories of what you have read in the classics. I can only say that the aphorism, *Without shedding of blood is no remission* (Heb. ix. 22) is borne out by every tradition, whether of Gentile or of Jew.[1] I copy the following from some recent *Travels in France:*

On the top of the Mont-Dôl was raised a temple in honour of Diana the huntress. At the eastern end of this temple were two altars: the surface of each of them was pierced by three rows of square holes, nine in each row. The altar was hollow and could be entered by an opening from the back: the person providing the sacrifice crept in under the altar and received a baptism of blood from the victim—generally a bull—slain upon it. There is a model in the Museum at Rennes of the taurobolic altars of the Mont-Dôl. It is said that these sacrifices to Diana continued until the sixth century.

The Jewish tradition is summed up in the Epistle to the Hebrews, c. ix. *The high priest entereth* into the holy of holies *not without blood, which he offereth for his own and the people's ignorance. . . .*

[1] Cf. Aristophanes, *Pax* 374, where a man, threatened with death, at once begs for money to buy an animal for sacrifice: also Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, 273, 428—430.

Moses taking the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, sprinkled the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. The tabernacle also itself and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled with blood; and all things nearly are cleansed with blood according to the law, and without shedding of blood is no remission. In the Temple at Jerusalem was kept up a perpetual daily sacrifice, one lamb in the morning and one in the evening, the morning and evening sacrifice, till the Temple was destroyed (Num. xxviii. 3—8). Yet that was a mere *parable of the time to come: it was impossible for sins to be taken away with the blood* of irrational animals (Heb. ix. 9; x. 4).

We are now come to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, of which all these sacrifices were the earnest and the figure. And first I would say that the crucifixion was before God a sacrifice, not an execution. Christ was not 'punished' by His Father for our sins. You may hear that expression sometimes used by uncautious believers, or even by disbelievers in the Atonement, who would willingly put the doctrine in an odious light. But it is not correct. Punishment presupposes condemnation: now there could be no condemnation passed upon Christ by God. It is true, *the chastisement of our peace was upon him* (Isaias liii. 5) which means that what would have been chastisement, had it fallen upon us, fell upon Him, and by His endurance of it our peace was made with God. But to Him it was not chastisement.

Christ died for our sins, says St. Peter, *the just for the unjust: he bore our sins in his body upon the tree* (1 Pet. iii. 18; ii. 24). *He was made for us sin*, says St. Paul, that is, as one sinful: *he was made a curse for us*, or as one accursed (2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13). These are deep utterances, and I should shrink from undertaking to declare to you the whole counsel of God in this regard. I will put what I am able to say shortly under these heads.

1. God the Son, entering the world as mortal man, became in His assumed human nature the new Head of mankind. He set aside our first parent, our original head and representative, whose transgression had involved us in spiritual ruin. He took Adam's place. Becoming our representative, He also became our surety, undertaking to pay our debts (Romans v.; 1 Cor. xv. 45—49).

2. This position of head and representative, and surety for the human race, was assumed by Jesus Christ *voluntarily:* by which word I refer not so much to His own divine decree, by which He made Himself man, as to the act of His human will subsequent to His Incarnation, by which He placed Himself at the disposal of His Father, to be the *Son of man*, i.e. the chief of mankind, to *take our infirmities and bear our diseases* (Matt. viii. 17), to obey as we had not obeyed, and to suffer what we had deserved to suffer. For we must remember that such was the dignity of Christ as Man that no command could be imposed upon Him apart from His own express human willingness to receive it. To compare great to small, the obedience that a

religious man pays to his superior is voluntary, inasmuch as it was by a free election that he originally bound himself thereto. But more than this, theologians say, it rested with Christ as man, at any moment of His earthly existence, even during the hours that He was hanging on the cross, by an absolute act of His human will to ask to be discharged of the burden of satisfying for us, and He would have been there and then discharged: He would have been glorified, and we left unredeemed (Heb. x. 5—10; Phil. ii. 6, 7).

3. It is scarcely necessary to say that Christ's suffering and death was voluntary also in this respect, that He was in no way overpowered by force of the Jews or surprised by treachery. Often as He willed, when surrounded by raging enemies, He *passed through the midst of them and went his way*. The Evangelists are solicitous to show how well He knew beforehand of Judas's treason (John x. 18; Luke iv. 30; Matt. xxvi. 21—25).

4. It was not the mere suffering of an unwilling victim that redeemed us, not the mere physical shedding of blood, as though blood acted like a charm or spell to the dissipation of sin. Our debt was contracted by disobedience, our first parent's and our own. Our debt was paid by obedience, most costly and heroic, even unto death and that the death of the cross, with its pain and shame and exhaustion (Rom. v. 19; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. xii. 2; Isaias liii.).

5. Any human act of Christ, even the lightest and easiest, was atonement enough in itself for all

human sin. The atonement of the Cross was superabundant, *for with him is plenteous redemption* (Ps. cxxix. 7).

6. All our spiritual good, all our hope of heaven is through the Cross. Through the Cross was Mary Immaculate, Magdalene's many sins were forgiven, and the thief was promised paradise (Acts iv. 12).

From the roof of the new Westminster Cathedral, over the high altar, there is to hang an immense crucifix, the largest 'Rood' in the world. The Cathedral is to be dedicated to the Precious Blood. This at least is Christianity, this is the Catholic faith in the Atonement

CONFERENCE XI.

THE DAILY PROCEDURE OF JUDGMENT.

Sexagesima Sunday, 5 February, 1899.

"THIS *word of faith* (Rom. x. 8) judges men (Heb. iv. 12), and is not to be judged by men. It exercises a judgment that is daily going on. There is peace for those whom it approves as true to it, and terrible judgment for all whom it condemns." Many years ago I noted down these words which struck me in a sermon. Very characteristic of St. John's Gospel is a peculiarity, which I am told has its counterpart in good music, the recurrence of a certain theme, or *motif*, now in the same form, now with slight variations. One of these themes is the idea of judgment, expressed in the passage which I have quoted. These are the principal texts of St. John, to which I refer. *For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him. He that doth not believe is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than the light* (iii. 17—19).

For judgment I am come into this world, that they who see not may see, and they who see may become blind (ix. 39). *Now is the judgment of this world* (xii. 31). *I am come a light unto the world, that whosoever believeth in me may not remain in darkness. And if any man hear my words and keep them not, I do not judge him: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that despiseth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day* (xii. 46—48).

You notice how our Lord says, *I am not come to judge the world, but to save;* and yet, *For judgment I am come into the world: now is the judgment of the world: this is the judgment, that light is come into the world.* The variation of language is partly explained by the Hebrew use of *not* for *not so much* (cf. the *not sacrifice* of Matt. ix. 13). Of the two comings of our Lord, the first, in the Incarnation and its continuation in the economy of the Church, is not so much to judge as to save mankind: the second, the *parousia* in the day of judgment, is first and foremost to judge the world, then to consummate the salvation of the elect. Yet the first coming, the Incarnation, the preaching of the Gospel, and the presence of Christ in His Church on earth, is also a judgment of the world, as the words which I have quoted give us clearly to understand. And this is the daily procedure of judgment, of which I wish to speak.

Often in elementary mathematics we have a number of small summations, s_1, s_2, s_3, &c., which we

gather under one general expression, and call it Σ. The value of this Σ is simply the collective value of those smaller summations, s_1, s_2, &c. Whatever determines them, goes to determine it. It is said of Babylon, *In one hour is thy judgment come* (Apoc. xviii. 10), which means that in one hour the judgment is summed up, formulated, and carried into effect. Yet day by day the matter of judgment is recorded against Babylon, new offences being adjudged and marked down: the sudden and final judgment of the city is the collection of these daily records. Or again, consider the familiar process of a written examination. The results are proclaimed at the end, perhaps with some solemnity: for some days previously the examiners have been occupied upon the papers, making up their minds: but the vital and essential process of judgment was while the examinees had the questions before them and were writing their answers. The questions set and the answers returned, that is *the word* which *judges*, or, in the literal sense of the word *κρίνει, sifts out*, the competent and the incompetent. Even so the word of Christ, spoken in His life on earth by Himself, and declared now by His Church, day by day judges and sifts out the believer and the unbeliever, the heedful and the heedless, the elect and the reprobate, the *sheep* and the *goats* (Matt. xxv. 32). When Christ comes in judgment at the last day, He shall but confirm and enforce the sum total of these separate judgments that we ourselves are recording for or against ourselves every day that we live.

The expectation of judgment is an attitude of mind peculiarly Christian. The ancients had heard of Æacus and Rhadamanthus, not to any serious effect upon the lives of most of them. They regarded no consequences of their actions except in the temporal order. Thus they found license to live recklessly,—an illogical license, I dare say, but men took it, and will take it when they expect no eternal Judge. The Apostles' message to the world was definite and came home, that He whom they had seen risen and ascending into heaven was to come again to judge every man according to his works. *He hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in justice by the man whom he hath appointed, whereof he hath given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead* (Acts xvii. 31). Such was the first lesson in Christianity given at Athens. And the lesson took such hold, that the first Christians looked forward to the coming of their Lord in judgment as an event that might occur any day, and very probably would occur in their lifetime. They did not appreciate the magnitude of the Incarnation and the breadth of Church history. They should rather have considered, or we should rather consider, our Lord's telling us that even His first coming, still continuing, is a continued judgment; and that every day of the Church's history and of our lives is a day of judgment for the Church and for us.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart be in good in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes;

eat thy bread in joy, and drink thy wine in gladness: and know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment (Eccles. ix. 7; xi. 9). The door is opened for your enjoying yourselves in the season when enjoyment is sweetest; at the same time you are reminded that these very temporal blessings are a test and a judgment of your fidelity to God. Much more is every supernatural gift, every grace, a judgment; the presence of Christ is a judgment, the Holy Eucharist, the Gospel, the Catholic Church is a judgment. The Church even now judges the world, that is, puts the world on its trial. The coming of Catholics to the University is a judgment to Cambridge, not certainly the condemnation of all who do not at once turn Catholic, but a reinforcement of the Christian element in men's minds, a condemnation of sheer unbelief, a call to become Christianised and therefore Catholicised further and further, according as the light of Christ shall illuminate each several soul. We have no discernment of the extent of such individual guidance in this case and in that. We are not judges: God's word is the judge: we cannot tell how far into each heart the divine light penetrates, and consequently how far it judges that individual man. Only in general we know that as there is a vast cloud of invincible ignorance, which is an excuse before God, and much good faith in erroneous and imperfect ways, so there is here in the world and there what in St. John's Gospel is called *darkness* and *blindness* (i. 5; iii. 19; ix. 39; xii. 37—40, 46), that is, shutting the eyes to such light as God actually offers in Christ to this or

that man's soul. This was the sin of many of the Jews with whom our Lord conversed, and it is the sin of many men, though we cannot say of what men, at this day. The Catholic Church is indeed a very grave presence to confront, and men feel it so, and grow uneasy before her: for all the terrors of the judgment-day are hidden beneath her russet robe. Like her Divine Founder, who commissioned her, she walks the earth in judgment. *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.*

Now I would have you observe that this judgment must *begin from the house of God* (1 Pet. iv. 17; Ezech. ix. 6). To Catholics above all men the teaching of the Catholic Church is a judgment. Theirs is the faith, and theirs the Sacraments. In the Gospels Our Lord speaks with earnestness approaching to alarm, about the responsibility incurred by those who adhered to Him, and followed Him, and received His gifts. Cf. Matt. vii. 21—27; viii. 11, 12; xi. 20—24; xii. 41, 42; Luke xi. 27, 28; John xiii. 17, 18. Not the mere reception, but the use of His gifts and the turning them to profit, did He look for. A gift given and accepted and then lying sterile, a *pound laid up in a napkin* (Luke xix. 20), He tells us is a fatal possession. We are still in the first generation of renewed Catholic life at the Universities. It is a great beginning, a grand advance, an epoch I believe it makes in the history of Catholicism in this country. Good and excellent as the movement is in itself, it can only lead to good by the good conduct of those who take part

in it, more especially of those who lead the way, whose action is most observed. Your rank among the earliest Catholics at Cambridge is your judgment, your trial: your fidelity now will be an earnest of the fidelity of the rest of your lives. Keep this before your eyes, that you are answerable before God, and will be judged by God, above the other members of the University. Now is your judgment.

To meet one daily procedure of judgment by another is the aim of the exercise which no wise Christian omits, of examining his conscience every night before retiring to rest. *If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged* (1 Cor. xi. 31). We consider our general relations with God, whether we have reason to think ourselves in His grace or not, and how judgment has gone for us or against us in the details of this particular day. We conclude in any case with the heartiest and most explicit act of contrition that we can make: "My God, I am sorry if ever I have seriously displeased Thee, because Thou art my Father, most worthy of all love." This is perfect contrition, and carries forgiveness of all mortal sin with it, through the Blood of Christ. We ask ourselves also what good we have done this day, what use we have made of God's blessings, our health, strength, and ability, and supernatural graces and favours; what good our last Communion has done us, whether we are less slothful, less petulant and arrogant, and more pure; whether we have carried out the good resolutions we then made, or whether we ever make any good

resolutions at all deserving of that name. Such is the daily examination of conscience.

It is a considerable trust, and large matter of judgment, to be a Catholic in the great arena of a University, where Catholics are few, in days when so much attention is paid to 'Romanist practices' and 'Romanising tendencies.'

CONFERENCE XII.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

Quinquagesima Sunday, 12 February, 1899.

LET me first expose what is of faith. The Council of Trent in the 22nd Session, chap. i., says:

Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, though He was once to offer Himself to God the Father by death on the altar of the cross, there to work out our eternal redemption, nevertheless, because His priesthood was not to be extinguished by His death, at the last supper, on the night of His betrayal, by way of leaving to His beloved Spouse the Church a sacrifice visible, as human nature requires,—a sacrifice that might be a representation and re-enactment of the sacrifice that was once to be accomplished in blood upon the cross, whereby the memory of it might endure to the end of the world, and the salutary effect of it might be applied to the remission of the sins that are daily committed by us,—showing Himself forth a priest appointed for ever according to the order of Melchisedech, offered His Body and Blood to God the Father under the appearances of bread and wine, and under the symbols of the same things gave them to His Apostles to receive, appointing them at the same time priests of the New Covenant, and commanding them and their successors in the priesthood to offer the same, which command

He gave in these words, *Do this in commemoration of me*, as the Catholic Church has ever understood and taught.

And in chap. ii.:

It is one and the same Victim and the same Offerer, now offering by the ministry of His priests, who then offered Himself on the Cross; only the manner of offering is different.

In the canons that follow, any one is anathematised who says that a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God in the Mass, or that the offering merely consists in Christ being given for our food, or that the sacrifice of the Mass is merely one of praise and thanksgiving, or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice accomplished on the Cross, and not a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it benefits the receiver alone, or that the sacrifice of the Mass is any derogation from the most holy sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the Cross.

We have also some authentic guidance in the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Epistle puts before us the Priesthood of Christ, in comparison with the priesthood of Aaron and his sons in the Jewish Covenant. Christ's priesthood is shown to be the reality, whereof the other was the shadow: Christ's priesthood eternal, the other temporary, and now ceased: Christ's sacrifice one and all-sufficient for the taking away of sin, the sacrifices of the Old Covenant many and insufficient. The entrance of the Jewish high priest once a year, bearing the

blood of victims, beyond the veil into the Holy of Holies, is marked for a figure of our Crucified Redeemer ascending beyond the clouds into heaven. Bearing this in mind we record the following texts, all the more willingly because they are quoted by Protestants against the sacrifice of the Mass. The theory that we shall follow suits these texts, we think, better than any other, because it maintains a closer dependence than any other theory of the sacrifice of the Mass upon the sacrifice of the Cross. *Our great high priest who hath passed within the heavens. Made higher than the heavens. Ever living to make intercession for us. Through his own blood entered in once for all into the holy place. He hath entered into heaven to appear now before the face of God for us. Christ was offered once* (as men die once). *Offering one victim for sins, . . . by one oblation he hath made perfect for ever them that are sanctified* (Heb. iv. 14; vii. 25, 26; ix. 12, 24, 28; x. 12, 14).

Lastly, to the text quoted by the Council, *Do this in commemoration of me* (1 Cor. xi. 24), we add the following declaration of the same: *For as often as you shall eat* [better reading, *you eat*] *this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show forth* [better, *you show forth*] *the death of the Lord until he come* (*ib. v.* 26).

We have then two principal points of faith regarding Holy Mass:

(*A*) The Mass is a true and proper sacrifice.

(*B*) The Mass is a commemoration of the death of Christ, a *showing forth of the death of the Lord.*

Moot points among Catholic theologians are:

(α) In what precisely consists the sacrificial rite of the Mass.

(β) How precisely the Mass shows forth the death of Christ.

Nearly all theologians are now agreed that:

(γ) The sacrificial rite of the Mass consists precisely in the consecration.

(δ) Precisely in the consecration does the Mass show forth the death of Christ.

Thus you see nearly all theologians agree in holding (γ) and (δ) as distinct propositions. But the theory that I am about to propose identifies (γ) and (δ), says that (γ) is (δ) and (δ) is (γ); in other words:

(γδ) The sacrificial rite of the Mass consists in the consecration precisely inasmuch as the consecration shows forth the death of Christ.

This theory was taught by Father Gabriel Vasquez, S.J. (1551—1604), in Spain and at Rome, and by Father John Perrone, S.J. (1794—1876), at Rome. The two Jesuit Cardinals de Lugo and Franzelin set it aside as insufficient. Still the theory remains tenable and probable. I give it you as one which, as Catholics, you may hold till you find a better. For twenty-five years, since I first approached the subject, I have not found one better, nor to my mind nearly as good.

First then, how the consecration in the Mass shows forth the death of Christ, and consequently the sacrifice of the Cross. No theory here is satisfactory, that does not take account of the consecration under both kinds, or that so dwells

upon the consecration of the bread as to make the consecration of the chalice superfluous, or at least, apart from the positive institution of Christ, non-essential. Christ died on the cross by the shedding of His Blood, by the separation of His Blood from His Body. That separation is marked by the separate consecration of the bread into the Body of Christ and the wine into His Blood. To understand this better, we must observe what is present under either species "by concomitance," as theologians speak, and what "by force of the words" of consecration. On the principle that "the sacraments effect what they signify," there is present in the Host, by force of the words of consecration, the Body of Christ and no more; and in the Chalice, by force of the words of consecration, the Blood of Christ and no more. But inasmuch as the Body of Christ does not exist except in conjunction with the rest of His Sacred Humanity, wherever the Body is, there is the whole Christ. Thus the Body is under the species of bread in the Host by force of the words: the Blood of Christ, His Soul, and His Divinity, by concomitance. And similarly of the Chalice. But, in regard of what is present by force of the words apart from concomitance, the first consecration places separately the Body of Christ, the second consecration His Blood. This is called by theologians a 'mystical,' or 'symbolical,' separation, and consequently a mystical, or symbolical, slaying of Christ. Thus in the double consecration *the death of the Lord is shown forth*, although He does not actually die.

Vasquez puts the matter thus:

Since, by force of the words, only the Body of Christ is put under the species of bread, and only His Blood under the species of wine,—although under either species the whole Christ is present by concomitance,—the consecration of the two separate species thus performed constitutes a representation of that separation of the Body from the Blood which makes death; and this representation is called a mystical separation. And the death itself is represented: therefore it is called a mystical slaying. . . . Before the consecration of the wine, the Body of Christ is not represented as dead and immolated (Vasquez, disp. 223, nn. 37, 45).

To this I will add some words from the Lenten Pastoral of His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan for 1895.

It is to be noted that after the Consecration the Priest addresses not one word to Our Lord as there, but addresses only God, as God in Heaven. . . . But at the *Agnus Dei* we begin to pray to Jesus Christ. This is said to be because Our Lord is treated after the Consecration as a Victim slain: a Victim is offered up, not spoken to. The placing of the particle of the Sacred Host in the Chalice [immediately before the *Agnus Dei*] is thought to represent the reunion of the Body and Blood of Our Lord in the Resurrection (*The Woman and her Child with us*, p. 12).

We are next to consider how in the Consecration we have the sacrifice of the Mass. For a sacrifice you must have a priest and a victim. The victim is some living creature. This living creature must be offered to God, and more than that, its life must be taken, it must be slain. To have been sacrificed

and still to be alive (apart from any resurrection) is a contradiction in terms.[1] The victim is slain to denote God's sovereign dominion, as Lord of life and death. Also, as the sacrifice is propitiatory, *i.e.* an atonement for sin, the victim is slain in substitution for the offerer, who confesses that he for his sin deserves to die. Such substitution is denoted by laying the hands upon the victim.[2] Thus we gather our definition. *A sacrifice is a religious rite, whereby a living thing is offered to God and slain, in acknowledgment of God's supreme dominion as Lord of life and death, and also in atonement for his sin for whom the sacrifice is offered, who confesses that he deserves to die, and gives the life of this living thing in substitution for his own.*

Whatever then there is in the Mass to mark Christ as slain, that constitutes the essential sacrificial rite of the Mass. But, as we have shown, the twofold consecration marks Christ as slain in the Mass: therefore it is the twofold consecration, so significant, that essentially constitutes the Mass a sacrifice.

But here comes a difficulty. Christ is not slain

[1] The reader may look up the meanings of σφάττειν and *mactare* in the dictionaries. The substantive *hostia* is connected with an old verb *hostio*, 'I strike.' And the truth that without sacrifice there is no forgiveness of sin is thus expressed: *without shedding of blood is no remission* (Heb. x. 22). Sacrifice then involves shedding of blood.

[2] *Thou shalt bring a calf before the tabernacle of the testimony; and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands over its head, and thou shalt slay it in the sight of the Lord* (Exod. xxix. 10, 11; cf. Levit. xvi. 21). This is why the priest stretches his hands over the bread and wine at the prayer *Hanc igitur* just before the consecration.

in the Mass really, only mystically and symbolically: therefore, it would appear, the Mass is not a real but only a mystical and symbolical sacrifice, which is no "true and proper sacrifice." To this it may be replied that, as a sacrifice is essentially a sign to God, symbolising His dominion and our sinfulness, such a sign may be paid sufficiently by a slaying which is symbolic only, in a case where the fitness of things militates against the actual death of the victim: this is illustrated by Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. xxii. 10—15). This answer goes some way to meet the difficulty. But our answer goes further. We distinguish between the symbol of a slaying which never takes place, and the symbol of a slaying which has actually taken place, the symbolic rite in either case being performed upon the very person of the victim there present We observe that though Isaac was not actually slain, the sacrifice was completed by the actual slaying of the ram that was substituted for him. But there can be no substitute for Christ, as Victim of our redemption. If then Christ never had been actually slain, the objection would have some weight. It might even be conceded,—Vasquez at least concedes,—that the mere mystical slaying of Christ by the separate consecration of His Body and Blood would not be enough to constitute a true and proper sacrifice but for the fact of its re-presenting and re-enacting in symbol the actual shedding of the Blood of Jesus Christ on the altar of the Cross. Thus the Crucifixion it is that makes the Mass a sacrifice. The Mass is a sacrifice

precisely by re-presenting before God the Crucifixion. With reason then does the Epistle to the Hebrews speak of *one oblation*. With reason does the Council of Trent define "the same Victim and the same Offerer, only the manner of offering being different." These are Vasquez's words:

> It is essential to a sacrifice commemorative, without actual shedding of blood, that it should represent a sacrifice where there was actual shedding of blood and death of the victim. Wherefore, if Christ had not died, this Sacrament would not be a sacrifice (disp. 223, n. 47).

I am bound to add that this last assertion of Vasquez is vehemently denied by other Catholic theologians: still I believe he is right. And his opinion is confirmed by the testimony of antiquity. When the Fathers and Doctors who lived before the Council of Trent speak, as they often do, of the sacrifice of the Mass, what is the special sacrificial feature that they fix upon? Precisely that which the words of the New Testament also fix upon, that the Mass is the memorial of the death of Christ. It is the memorial of a sacrifice, and by that it is itself a sacrifice; in other words, it is essentially a commemorative sacrifice, and the commemoration makes the sacrifice. Here are some examples.

> What then, do not we offer every day? Indeed we do offer, but by making commemoration of this death. And it is one sacrifice, not many, . . . for we offer ever the same Victim. . . . Not a different sacrifice, as the Jewish high priest [offered now one lamb, now another], but the same sacrifice we offer always; or rather, we

make commemoration of a sacrifice (St. Chrysostom on Hebrews x. 10).

The celebration of this Sacrament is a representative image of the Passion of Christ, which Passion is a true immolation of Him; and therefore the representation made in this Sacrament is called an immolation of Christ (St. Thomas, *Summa*, p. 3, q. 83, art. 1).

Quoties hujus hostiæ commemoratio celebratur, opus nostræ redemptionis exercetur—(As often as the commemoration made by this Victim is celebrated, the work of our redemption is put in exercise. Secret for ninth Sunday after Pentecost).

Quoties ei hostiam suæ passionis offerimus, toties nobis ad absolutionem nostram passionem illius reparamus—(As often as we offer to Him the Victim of His Passion, so often do we make His Passion over again to ourselves for our forgiveness. St. Gregory, hom. 37, on the Gospels, n. 7).

Dicit (Augustinus) in manifesto corpore suo et in distinctis membris humanitatis suæ semel passum in cruce, qui non manifeste sed invisibiliter est in Sacramento quotidie non passus sed quasi passus repræsentatus. (St. Augustine says that He suffered once on the Cross, in His Body manifest and in the distinctly visible members of His Humanity, who every day in the Sacrament is represented, not manifestly, but invisibly, not suffering, but as it were suffering. Algerus, *De Sacramentis*, l. 1, c. 16).[1]

I have kept back a difficulty which I must now face—the main objection alleged against the theory of Vasquez. I face it gladly: a sound theory gains

[1] Algerus was a monk of Cluny (1075—1135). His treatise, *De Sacramentis Corporis et Sanguinis Domini*, possessed a deserved reputation. It is printed in Migne, tom. 180. The whole chapter, l. 1, c. 16, well confirms our argument.

strength from opposition. It is said: 'A commemoration is not the thing commemorated: the commemoration of a victory is not a victory, neither then is the commemoration of a sacrifice a sacrifice: thus it would appear that the theory reduces the Mass to a "bare commemoration of the sacrifice accomplished upon the cross," the very view which the Council of Trent formally condemns as heretical.' The objection, I say, rather brings out the merits of the theory. In the first place, though the commemoration of an event is not the event itself, and the Mass is not the Crucifixion, yet the commemorative re-enactment of a sign may well be itself a sign. But a sacrifice, as we have seen, is a sign to God of recognition of His dominion. Thus the instance of the victory is not in point: a victory and a sacrifice are not in the same category, for a victory is not essentially a sign, a sacrifice is. Moreover, the Mass is emphatically not "a bare commemoration." Deny the Real Presence, as the heresies of the sixteenth century denied it: leave only bread and wine on the altar; and any rite gone through upon that bread and wine will be the "bare commemoration," which the Council of Trent anathematised. The Sacrifice is lost with the Real Presence. But the rite as we have described it, commemorative of the sacrifice of Calvary, is performed upon the very Body which was pierced there and the Blood which flowed there. It is performed by the express institution and command of Him who was offered there. It is a sacrifice of Christ's own designing; and the living, present Christ is offered in it.

Vasquez himself meets the objection in these words:

For a commemorative sacrifice to be a true and proper sacrifice, it is not enough for it to be a mere bare sign of the death of a thing, without in any way containing the thing itself, the death of which is represented. At that rate, the thing itself, the death of which is represented, could not be said to be offered in sacrifice; nor would there be there any true commemorative sacrifice, but rather a mere sign and phantom of a sacrifice (*signum tantum et larva sacrificii*). It is an indispensable requisite that the thing itself, the death of which is represented, be the sign of its own death. . . . For how can that be said truly and really to be offered in sacrifice, about which no action of the offering priest takes place in reality, but only in similitude and in figure?

In plain words, how could Christ be offered if He were not there? Vasquez goes on:

Christ Himself under the species of bread and wine by the peculiar way in which the consecration is performed by the priest, represents the death that He died by real shedding of His Blood. . . . And though He is not said really and truly to be slain and die, but only in figure and similitude, nevertheless He is said really and truly to be immolated and offered in sacrifice (Vasquez, disp. 222, nn. 66, 67).

"We repudiate any repetition of the sacrifice of Christ: we only place before God the memorial of it," writes an Anglican to *The Times* (20 Jan. 1899, signed C. N. Gray). Before letting this statement pass, we must enquire whether the "memorial" is

bread and wine, which would be the "bare commemoration" condemned at Trent, the *larva sacrificii* repudiated by Vasquez, or whether it is the true Body and Blood of Christ under the appearances of bread and wine, in which sense we willingly accept the statement. In speaking of the Mass, the Catholic Church never uses the phrase "repetition of the sacrifice of Christ." Our Catholic Bishops write: "It was then offered once and for all: and there is no necessity of repeating it." The Mass they call "a mystic representation of the blood-shedding of Christ."[1] 'Representation' (in the sense of 're-presentation'), and 're-enactment,' and 'reflection,' of the sacrifice of the Cross are terms that we may employ in speaking of the Mass. But it is not a 'repetition,' any more than the moon is a repetition of the sun. All the Masses that are said shine as moons or planets around the central sun of the sacrifice of the Cross, deriving from it their light and their sacrificial being. Christ crucified, Christ in Heaven, Christ in the consecration of the Mass, are the three phases of the eternal priesthood of our great high priest. The Crucifixion was once for all, it is past and gone, but abides in everlasting efficacy. In heaven, Christ *ever lives to make intercession for us*, not in any posture of supplication or humiliation, for He reigns there in glory, but the very presence of His Sacred Body, marked with the Wounds, is a continual intercession on our behalf. He comes on our altars, not in glory, but in simple and abject guise, *a Lamb standing as slain*

[1] *Vindication of the Bull 'Apostolicæ Curæ,'* n. 12.

(Apoc. v. 6), to the end of the world. The great fact is, that one and the same Person, God and Man, was on Calvary, is in Heaven, and is also (under another appearance) on the Altar from the consecration till He is received in Holy Communion. Whoever accepts that fact, can have no difficulty in accepting the definitions of Trent on the Mass, which alone are of faith: beyond that, as a theological speculation, he can make his choice between the theories of Vasquez, Franzelin, Cienfuegos, and others. Using this liberty, I have followed and advocated the theory of Vasquez. It is helpful to devotion to have some theory here.

Outside the Catholic Church in England we hear loud discussions, the voice of many waters, set up by the meeting of two conflicting currents of religious thought. The old Protestant hatred of the Mass, in which the Reformation began, flows on, steady and strong. But a stream that has long flowed as a feeble undercurrent in a contrary direction, has now gathered strength, and has come to the surface in formidable and manifest opposition. This stream is the "craving for the Mass," as the *Spectator* once named it. Clergy and laity in the Established Church are telling one another that the Mass was not abolished, or ought not to have been abolished, at the Reformation. Many would be glad to bring the Mass back again, even at the price of undoing the Reformation. The battle at the Reformation waxed hottest over the Mass. "It is the Mass that matters," some one truly said. It is the Mass that matters in the present 'crisis in

the Church' of England. To us Catholics in England above all, it is the Mass that matters. For the Mass, the English martyrs bled, and confessors of the faith were imprisoned for harbouring the Mass in their houses. It must matter very much to our salvation with what earnestness and frequency we assist at Holy Mass. Do we hear it as often as we can, or as seldom as we dare? And while we kneel before the Altar, what is our appreciation of the Mystery?

CONFERENCE XIII.

EVERLASTING DEATH.

First Sunday in Lent, 19 February, 1899.

In the Conferences of last term we considered life everlasting, as it takes the form of the life of grace in this world, and as it will be finally realised in its perfection in heaven. But, as Ecclesiasticus says, *all things are double* (Ecclus. xlii. 25): to everything there is a reverse side. The reverse of life and light is death and darkness. In Holy Writ there is continual mention both of one and of the other, in the supernatural order. The one we have seen to be very good, the other must in proportion be passing evil. Better progress, all the worse overthrow: it is the rule everywhere. The reverse of life everlasting is everlasting death, from which in the Litany we pray to be delivered, as from the culmination of all evil. *A morte perpetua, libera nos Domine.* Scripture tells us plainly in what the second, final, and everlasting death consists: *this is the second death, the lake of fire* (Apoc. xx. 14). It is the mission of the Church to lead men along the way that Christ has opened for them, the path of life everlasting to its consummation in heaven. It is equally the Church's mission to guard men from

everlasting death. The first precaution is to warn men of the reality of the danger, and to explain what everlasting death means. And this exposition must be not academical but practical: it must put the facts in such a way as to form the strongest possible deterrent against people exposing themselves to eternal perdition. That is why the New Testament, and the Church its faithful interpreter, ever insists principally upon the punishment of fire in hell. Every Christian dreads this fire. One need not be a very spiritually-minded person to dread hell fire. And a true fire it is, not to be identified with the agonies of those who suffer it, but an objective, physical cause of those agonies; an element, or environment, into which sinners are *cast* (Mark, ix. 45; Apoc. xx. 15). It is of faith that whoever dies in mortal sin, his soul goes down immediately into hell, there to be tormented for ever. It is of faith that this torment is of two sorts, 'the pain of loss' (of God), and 'the pain of sense,' which pain of sense is principally that of fire. It is at least proximate to faith, that this fire is a true, proper, real fire, not anything figuratively so called.[1]

This is a fearful matter to think about. But we take a false view of hell, if we regard it as a mere scene of physical torment. The torment belongs not so much to the physical as to the moral order. Hell is not the dwelling of misery and misfortune,

[1] By far the best exposition that I know of the authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church on the subject of hell in all its details is an article in the *Dublin Review* for January, 1881, 'Eternal Punishment.' A reprint of that valuable article would be a great boon.

but of wilfulness and crime. Hell too, in a certain sense, is a place *where justice dwelleth* (2 Pet. iii. 13), that is, where they dwell who are being justly punished. Hell is for the wicked. Now the tormenting dread of hell is part of hell; it is as it were some radiation of that fire reaching the earth; that tormenting dread then is for the wicked also, not for the just. Let them be terrified, scared, and amazed by the prospect of hell, who are rushing along the broad road that leads thither. Such terror is for them most salutary: it is the beginning of conversion. But for those whose feet are in the *narrow way that leadeth to life* (Matt. vii. 14), whose supreme desire, at least when their minds are in their normal and habitual state, is to please God and save their souls, the torturing fear of hell is not their portion on earth, God does not intend it for them. Not that even they can dispense with the fear of hell altogether: for their *charity* is not *perfect* (cf. 1 John, iv. 18), and may fail: therefore the fear of hell should be down somewhere in the depths of their consciousness, to come up to the surface and operate as a deterrent in severe temptation, or as a motive of prompt repentance after a fall. It should also be brought to the surface at times by a good discourse on hell, lest it be lost beyond power of recovery in the hour of need.

The best fear of hell, a fear that will not alarm or harass, is the concomitant of a yearning desire to possess God in heaven: it is the apprehension of losing that on which our heart is strongly fixed. In a good man the desire of possessing God grows

with his growth from boyhood through youth to manhood; and it alone gathers strength, while all else within him is falling to decay. The man who little knows God fears hell fire, if he fears anything supernatural. But the man who knows God and loves Him dreads the loss of God more than he dreads hell fire. It is profitable to such a soul in meditation to dwell more upon the pain of loss than upon the pain of sense. It should be the aim of the Christian preacher to lead his audience on to fear the former pain more than the latter. And to the actual sufferers, the pain of loss is worse than the pain of sense: they would gladly embrace the fire, if at the price of that suffering they could repurchase the heaven which they have forfeited. That is because, as I tried to show you in the last Conference of last term, the sight of God is a much better good than hell fire is evil, and the lost know that it is so. Such is the constant tradition of the Church. We find it proclaimed in these words of St. Chrysostom, spoken in the great church at Antioch, some time between A.D. 386 and 398.

You would think that there was only one punishment, the burning fire; look more closely, and you will see that there are two. Whoever is cast into that fire loses also the kingdom of heaven: the loss is a severer punishment than the fire. I know that many dread the fire only: but I say that the being cast out from such glory is a much more poignant pain than the fire of hell. No wonder if it is impossible for me to bring this home to you in words. We do not know the blessedness of the good things in heaven sufficiently to enable us to form any adequate idea of the misery of losing them.

We shall know one day, when we come to have experience. But never be that our lot, Thou only-begotten Son of God!

Never may we have experience of that final woe of punishment! An unbearable thing is hell, and the chastisement thereof. But though one tell of a thousand hells, he will utter nothing so dreadful as the being banished from that glory and happiness, as the being abhorred of Christ, as the reproach of not having nourished Him in His hunger. Better be struck with ten thousand thunderbolts, than see that mild Face turned away from us, and that gentle Eye not enduring to behold us.[1]

Though then *the lake of fire* be *the second death*, it is rather the loss of God that formally deserves that name. The first death, which men die in this world, is the separation of the soul from the body: the second death, which men inflict upon themselves in this world, but which only becomes hopeless and everlasting in the world to come, is the separation of God from the soul. For God is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body. I do not mean that God and the soul conspire into the unity of one person. But short of that, even in the natural order, there is a certain union between God and the soul, a certain play and influence of the Divine Mind upon the human, without which all intellectual life would be impossible: and supernaturally the connection is much closer, the Holy Ghost dwelling in man as the principle of the supernatural life of grace. As the soul departs from the

[1] Hom. 23 (al. 24) in Matt.

body when the body is no longer apt to hold it, or is no longer *in potentia ad vitam*, as the schoolmen speak: so God the Holy Ghost leaves the soul, leaves the whole man, that vilifies and defiles himself, soul and body, by mortal sin. Yet God does not so far depart from him as not still to hover over him, seeking a return by the man's repentance. The Jews had an idea that a departed soul hovered about its body till the fourth day, when decomposition set in (cf. John xi. 39). And among the illustrations of the *Oxford Bible* (Plate xxiv.), I see an Egyptian figure of the soul of Ani the Scribe (about B.C. 1400), in the form of a human-headed bird, hovering over the mummied body. So I say God hovers over the soul of a sinner, anxious to re-enter there by His grace. But a time comes at the end of life, when the last refusal of grace is made, and God leaves that soul unto death everlasting. Did any such conception flash through the mind of Homer, when he wrote that wonderful line, describing Hector in the last crisis of his fate (*Iliad*, xxii. 213)?

ὥχετο δ' εἰς ἀΐδαο, λίπεν δέ ἑ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.

Down to death his way he wended, and the radiant Sun-God left him.

The body falls to dust, when the soul is gone from it; so the total, final retirement of God from the soul involves the undoing of the whole man, soul and body, naturally and supernaturally. *Fear him that can destroy*, wreck and undo, *both body and soul in hell* (Matt. x. 28). "God is nearer to us," says Mother Julian of Norwich, "than our own soul:

for He is the ground on which our soul stands" (*Revelations*, ch. 56). What must happen when that ground is taken away, not by such a withdrawal of God as would mean annihilation, but by a withdrawal of the loving care and kindness of God? The whole being of the creature so abandoned must be in a state of disruption. It must be in the most unnatural state conceivable: for nothing is so natural, so germane to the soul as God. Now we know that all pain is simply some felt perversion of the order of nature within us. There can then be no worse pain than the felt loss of God. There are probably millions of souls from whom God withdraws Himself in the supernatural order, but not in the natural. I refer to infants who die without baptism. They are eternally unappreciative of the loss they have suffered of the beatific vision: thus there is room for natural happiness in them to have its way.[1] But from Christians who have died in deadly sin, God withdraws Himself in every order and in every way, except in that of conservation of their being and chastisement of their offence. These are *the slain sleeping in the sepulchres, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cast off from thy hand* (Psalm lxxxvii. 5). Cast off into the outer darkness, away from the light of Thy countenance and Thy love, away from election and adoption and sanctification and redemption, abandoned to torture and to devils, exposed without protection to everlasting fire, *vixerunt*, they have lived in vain. We do not know

[1] See above, pp. 20, 21.

how far they may be severally conscious of their loss. But from the expression "unequal punishments," used by the Council of Florence, we may argue, what is otherwise *a priori* to be expected, that the consciousness of having lost God will be stronger in some souls than in others,—stronger very likely in those who have come nearer to God in His Church, and in this life have *tasted and seen that the Lord is sweet* (Psalm xxxiii. 9: cf. Matt. xi. 22: Heb. x. 29).

We cannot consider this everlasting death without some speculation as to who incur it. Individual cases we cannot know: besides, science is not of individual cases, but of generalities. Generally then, the bad of all denominations incur everlasting death, bad Jews and bad Gentiles, bad Catholics and bad Protestants, bad Athenians of old and bad Romans of the present day.[1] I call him a bad man who violates the dictate of his conscience, who shuts his eyes and goes on regardless of the measure of light that God vouchsafes to him. Thus he would be a bad Protestant, to whom God revealed the claims of the Catholic Church on the allegiance of all mankind, and who yet stood aloof from that Church. But I must further qualify this word 'bad.' I say then that, speaking generally, everlasting death is incurred by the malignantly and contumaciously bad. And I will illustrate what I mean by an example from the science of surgery, as it is now practised since the discovery by Lord

[1] Observe St. Paul's words, Rom. ii. 6—16.

Lister of what is called the 'antiseptic treatment.' The object is to exclude from the open surface of a wound the germs of putrefaction, which commonly are met with everywhere. Exclude them, and many a wound can be healed, though sufficient of itself to cause death without this care. Thus wounds of their own nature mortal fall into two classes, those from which putrefaction is kept away, and those where putrefaction is allowed to take its course. Of the former the patient is healed: of the latter he dies. So there are mortal sins of frailty and passion, and there are mortal sins of malice. Of the former the sinner would die everlastingly, if he remained in them: but he is cured by the antiseptic treatment of contrition and humility and confession. Thus his sin never comes to be of a malignant type. He has been unfaithful, he has forsaken God, but he has not gone the length of *fighting against God* (*θεομαχεῖν*, Acts v. 39). There are again mortal sins of malice, sins of the spirit rather than of the flesh, when a man hardens his heart against God, wills no more to have Him for his God, or even denies Him or His revelation. A sinner of this type is proud, froward, impenitent. Every priest who has tried to bring erring souls to their duty knows this type of sinner, and how impossible it is to win him, while this malignancy lasts. Of some sin of this sort Our Lord says: *Whoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him* (Luke xii. 10). It shall not be forgiven him, because he will not stoop to seek forgiveness. This is the *sin unto death*, of which St. John writes, *Not con-*

cerning that do I say that any one should make request (1 John v. 16). The sin is *unto death*, exactly so far as the sinner wills to remain haughty, obstinate, and impenitent. To repeat St. Chrysostom's words: "But never be that our state, Thou only-begotten Son of God."

CONFERENCE XIV.

A RELIGION ENTIRELY SPIRITUAL.

Second Sunday in Lent, 26 February, 1899.

A STRANGE and strong delusion, matter enough in its effects for a whole history, has prevailed in England since the sixteenth century, as though spiritual religion, or the religion of the heart, were to be secured by the abolition of external symbols and practices of religion. Spiritual religion is indeed to salvation what oxygen is to life, the very breath of our nostrils. Of all external things oxygen is the most necessary to the animal body. An animal can live a long time without food: but cut off from the blood the supply of oxygen, and the animal will die of asphyxia in a few minutes. You would think therefore that the more oxygen in the air, the better: but nature has arranged it otherwise: she mixes the air for us in the proportion of one volume of oxygen to four of nitrogen. Nor can we improve upon the mixture. An animal dies in an atmosphere of pure oxygen as surely as in one of pure nitrogen. And a purely spiritual religion is found in practice as deadly to man's soul as a religion of mere external rites.

The Reformation in England was wrought under

pretext of making religion spiritual. There was breaking of images, overturning of altars, mutilation of ritual, abolition of pious customs. These things were 'carnal,' they 'savoured of the ceremonies of the Jewish law, combated by St. Paul.' Elizabeth however, in common with great part of the nation, had some love for ritual; and preserved more of it than the then rising party of Puritans cared to see, —indeed, as the sequel has shown, the fruitful seed of much modern ceremonial. Against this the earliest Dissenters made their protest. The breach between Church of England and Dissent was widened in Laud's days, as the Anglican Church services grew in dignity and outward comeliness. In the Commonwealth Dissent had its brief hour of victory; and more damage was then done to Church architecture and religious sculpture, under plea of purifying God's house, than had been done perhaps under Elizabeth. I do not follow the history further, except to notice, in the age following the Commonwealth, the rise of the Society of Friends, without ritual, without Sacraments, and with no more than a rudimentary Creed. This body represents the thorough negation of all external religion. Do I do this amiable body, the Society of Friends, any wrong in supposing them to be a select association of sober-minded, philanthropic, and well-to-do persons, rather than a religious denomination?

Still we cannot pretend that that bugbear of the Low Churchman and the Dissenter, a religion of outward observances, void of inward spirit, is a phantom of the imagination, and not a real evil ever

observed in human society. Our Lord quotes from Isaias the text: *This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me* (Isai. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8). Our Lord found among the Jews of His day this vicious state of things, and often refers to it (e.g. Matt. xxiii. 23—30): the prophets found it also in their generation (Isai. lviii. 3—6; Jerem. vii. 4, 22, 23; xi. 15). The name of this vice is Formalism. Formalism is the multiplication of outward rites and images of religion, to the neglect of charity and justice, mercy and purity, and the fear of the Lord. It is likely to have place wherever the Church is wealthy, powerful, supported by the secular arm, above the competition of rivals: where the career of an ecclesiastic is fashionable, lucrative, and not very laborious. Formalism found place at Constantinople in the days of the Greek Empire, at Paris under Louis XIV., in Italy in the fifteenth century. Not that all were formalists in those times and places, far from it: but the formalist was frequently to be seen there,—the man who honoured God with his lips, with many religious observances, as the fashion of the time required, while his heart was far from God's law and God's love. If this University and that of Oxford were both entirely Catholic, with all their emoluments and prestige, you would be in danger of Formalism. As matters stand, Formalism is one of the last things you need be afraid of. On the contrary, you might be the better for many more external images of religion than can be yours at present.

In the age when the Reformers were combating

Formalism by iconoclasm, a man rose up who fought against it with very different weapons. I allude to my holy father, St. Ignatius Loyola. He took men aside from the press of life for a few days, and taught them in that time such exercises as reciting the Church's prayers slowly, pausing for reflection between each word; and again, meditation on the meaning of human life and man's destiny; a plan of laying out life methodically, and self-examination to watch the carrying out of the plan; and certain systematic studies of the life of our Lord in view of realising each scene vividly as though the person contemplating had been himself present thereat. The effect of these "Spiritual Exercises," as they were called, was to infuse new spirit into the forms of religion. The forms were preserved, but they became living where they had been dead before, or more active where they had been living.

There is no opposition between feeling and the embodiment of feeling in gesture, nor between religion of the heart and outward forms of religion. It will be said that outward forms should be spontaneous and impromptu, not conventional. I reply that conventional expressions are well in keeping with and even further the sentiment of the heart. Thus military music, all studied and composed beforehand, is an aid to military spirit; and the same holds of sacred music and the religious spirit. Further, I deny that these outward forms are purely conventional. If they are what they should be, they are the cultivated language of the heart. I know

there is music heard in churches which does not inspire devotion, music that has no sound of prayer about it, that makes even private prayer impossible, and sounds as the voice of men taking liberties in the presence of their Creator. But a class of things is not to be judged of from its evil and depraved specimens. True religious art, whether in architecture, in decoration, in ceremonial, in music, or in the composition of forms of prayer, is part of that sacramental system, whereby *the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and divinity* (Rom. i. 20). Matter is not the born antagonist of spirit, as the Manicheans fondly pretended. If spirit wears the 'image' of God, matter is impressed with His 'footstep'; so theologians speak. One who knew the mysteries of both worlds was continually drawing analogies from the operations of nature and the daily life of man to the doings of God and the truths of the unseen world. Had our Lord lived in our age, we cannot doubt that He would have taken some of His parables from the inventions that characterise the nineteenth century, from the uses of steam and electricity, from the printing press and parliaments. There is God under all nature and under every development of science and art. The visible creation is a natural sacrament, conveying the knowledge of God to us. *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge* (Psalm xviii. 2). That which the morning light reveals, that which the artificial fires of evening guide us to, is the *glory of God and his handiwork*;

for whatever man has contrived, God has wrought, so far as there is any goodness and beauty in the contrivances of man. Setting the supernatural order upon the basis of the natural, it was appropriate for God to select certain material agencies, as water and oil, and the spoken words of man, to be channels of His gifts of grace. Such are the sacraments of the Church, outward forms essential to Christianity. God deals with us through these material agencies; we deal with Him by sensible and material expressions of our devotion, not merely by the inward language of the heart.

There are two things in a sacrament, the inward grace and the outward rite. The inward grace, as remission of sins and increase of supernatural life and union with God, belongs to spiritual religion: without it, the outward rite is a bare and barren form. The outward rite, like Noe's rainbow (Gen. ix. 12—17), is the token of a covenant between heaven and earth: it preaches God's word to the recipient of the sacrament and to the faithful who witness it and look on. This is why the greatest of the sacraments, the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, is not given us only to be received in Holy Communion, though that be its ultimate and principal purpose as a sacrament, but also to be carried about in Procession and gazed upon at the Elevation and in Benediction.

We read in the Old Testament of certain 'Theophanies,' or visible appearances of God, or of an angel representing God, as the three men who visited Abraham at the oak of Mambre (Gen. xviii.);

the burning bush that Moses saw, and the burning mount of Sina (Exod. iii., xxxiv.; Heb. xii. 18—21); those gentler apparitions to Moses and to Elias and to Eliphaz the Themanite (Exod. xxxiii. 18—23; 3 Kings xix. 11—13; Job iv. 12—16); the angel of the Lord that spoke to Gideon, and to Manue (Judges vi. 11—24; xiii. 15—22); the vision of Isaias (Isai. vi. 1—5); the *shechinah*, or cloud of glory that hung over the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant (Exod. xxxiii. 9; Num. xiv. 10; 3 Kings viii. 10—13). All these were preludes to the Incarnation, *that great sacrament*, or *mystery*, *of godliness*, whereby God *was made manifest in the flesh* (1 Tim. iii. 16). The worship, whereof the Incarnate God is the centre, cannot possibly be a mere spiritual religion. Worship must be adapted to its object; it must pay a visible homage to a visible Deity. The notion of a purely spiritual religion is the veriest heresy: it is the subversion of the Incarnation and of Christianity. The outcome and extension of the Incarnation is the visible Church, Messiah's Kingdom in this world, though not of this world,—the temple consecrated for the exercise of Christ's priesthood through His human ministers, according to a sacrificial and sacramental ritual, of which the essential lines are of His designing.

As there are accidents to every created substance, so about the simple rites which Christ Himself instituted, there has gathered a great body of rites instituted by the Church, and guarded by the Roman Congregation of Rites; and beyond them again, as accidents more separable still, are the

devotions of private persons, objects and practices which embody more or less felicitously the mind of Christ and of His Church in religious worship. It is the tendency of persons of earnest piety to multiply these objects and practices; but some souls are helped by them more than others. You see more of them as you walk round in one Catholic church than in another. On the whole, Catholic piety is decidedly favourable to their multiplication, but they are things of choice and devotion, not of duty.

The Evil One loves Formalism, no doubt; yet stronger than his love for a heartless accomplishment of religious forms, so it appears to me, is his hatred of those forms in themselves, inasmuch as they are sensible signs of the presence of the Creator in the visible world, and tell of the Incarnation. For Satan is the 'adversary' of the Incarnate God. And, visible things being Satan's usual baits for souls, he hates to see his craft turned against himself, and souls allured and drawn to God by means of visible things. This explains Iconoclasm in the Eastern Church; and Mohammedanism, which took up Iconoclasm; and Puritanism, which broke so many holy images and unroofed so many sanctuaries. This is why, at the end of those 'Spiritual Exercises' to which I have referred as the grand antidote to Formalism, St. Ignatius bids men "praise the ecclesiastical chant, psalms, and long prayers in church and out of church, the canonical Hours, relics of Saints, stations, pilgrimages, jubilees, and lighted candles in churches, fasts and

abstinences and exterior penances, the ornamentation and building of churches, likewise images."

By way of epilogue and practical conclusion, I subjoin some words which I penned recently for a school magazine.[1]

THE NEW WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL.

The great difficulty for Christians in the twentieth century will be not so much keeping the commandments as keeping the faith at all. Already the ear catches the sighing of the storm, the gathered fury of which will clean carry away the faith of thinking men, wherever that faith is not strongly and deeply rooted. It is no intellectual danger to faith that I am about to consider, no arguments, critical, historical, philosophical, or other, but the danger that arises simply and sheerly from the force of imagination. Not that I have anything to say about unwholesome and filthy imaginations. I speak of the healthy exercise of the imagination upon the glorious sights and brave shows of this world. We cannot abstain from seeing these glories. Once seen, repeatedly seen, they must fill our minds and be represented by fantastic images in the chambers of our brain. We cannot do away with the danger by abolition of the cause. We must live within shot of it, under range of its fire, with its death-carrying missiles flying all about us. We cannot turn Trappists or Carthusians. We must see the world, read the newspapers, and be strongly taken up with the interests of this life. What then is the danger? Simply this, that our imagination being filled with the things of this world, will fill our hearts and affections also with love of these same visible things, leaving no room there for any desire of

[1] *The Beaumont Review* for March, 1899. I am indebted to the courtesy of the Editor for permission to reprint them.

God, or love of God, or fear of God either. But where the love and fear of God is cast out, belief in God can hardly stay: certainly it cannot stay when it is also assailed, as it is assailed at present, with many intellectual difficulties, and by the tone of mind of multitudes around us who have practically flung all faith away.

This world is a very interesting place to a thinking man, and was never so interesting as now. Business is interesting, so are amusements. Rapid travel, and news from all parts of the earth spreading almost instantaneously, bring the world in upon us as it never came in upon our stay-at-home ancestors. The roar of the world penetrates by every avenue to our souls. Worldly things, innocent enough possibly, but still worldly and with no remembrance of God about them, cover every page of the tablets of our hearts. We are borne round and round in a whirl of business and of pleasure till we are giddy with excitement. We are too excited to pray. We feel no need of prayer: worldly amusements are everywhere to hand, and they alone seem sufficient. When we have given up prayer, we do not long go on believing in the use of prayer. Thus faith is crowded out by worldly images.

"That great institution the Catholic Church," says Cardinal Newman, "has been set up by Divine Mercy as a present visible antagonist, and the only possible antagonist to Sight and Sense."[1] As Jeremy Taylor puts it, imagination must be "bribed with its proper objects." It will never do for religion to be merely spiritual, merely intellectual, confined to the higher regions of the soul. Left up there, it will die of cold and starvation. Religion is lost when it ceases

[1] Lecture on *Christianity and Medical Science*, Dublin, 1858, from which and from his sixth University Sermon on *Faith and Sight* the idea of this paper is borrowed.

to compete with its rivals, the objects of sense, on their own ground. People who cry for spiritual religion, misapplying the text about "worship in spirit and in truth," either know what they are about, and wish to abolish religion, or they do not understand the scope and tendency of their own words,—they are crying for the abolition of religion all the same. So the Jansenists attacked casuistry, and overturned the confessional. "Clear your mind of cant," was the vigorous advice of Dr. Johnson: there is no such cant as this talk of spiritual religion. We want a religion,—of God indeed, heavenly, divine and spiritual, but likewise of man, suited to man, earthly and visible in its representations, human in its practices and worship. For this the invisible God became visible Man in the Incarnation: He "knew what was in man," and how like must be drawn by like. Therefore the Church gives us to worship the Sacred Flesh of Christ. We have no feast of the Soul of Christ, and no special devotion thereto enjoys the Church's commendation. But we honour the Holy Child at Christmas, and the Crucified Body on Good Friday, and the Risen Body at Easter, and the Ascended Body, and Corpus Christi, and the Precious Blood, and the Five Wounds, and the Sacred Heart.

In London, if anywhere on earth, imagination is likely to carry away Christianity. Elsewhere the world is powerful: in London it is huge, overpowering, stupendous. Imagination must be met by counter-imagination: Christ and His Kingdom must appear to the popular eye. Some sign of it is appearing in a great and growing erection of brickwork and scaffolding, the new Westminster Cathedral. Perhaps some one who reads these lines will apply the means that are ready to his hand to make it grow faster. It is being

set up, the mother-church of English Catholics, "a present visible antagonist to Sight and Sense," to lift the eyes of imagination to "a city not made with hands," and to fill the ear with heavenly voices, crying above the roar of London: "Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people, and be not angry with us for ever."

CONFERENCE XV.

A RELIGION WITHOUT A POLITY.

Third Sunday in Lent, 5 March, 1899.

THE word 'polity' ought never to die in our language, immortalised as it has been in the title of the great work of 'the judicious Hooker,' *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a defence, as you know, of the form of Church government established under Elizabeth against certain ultra-Protestants of Geneva, who railed against it as unscriptural. A *polity*, πολιτεία, is a form of government: thus monarchy, democracy, are polities. The view I have in mind to combat is this, that there should be religion indeed, but no manner of polity in religion any more than in music; that each man's devotion in religion should be regulated by his own taste and conscience, without any interference of one man with another on religious grounds, or any dictation of one man to another touching any religious rites or observances. 'How many men between my soul and God!' exclaimed Rousseau: and this exclamation of that not very godly soul is taken up by thousands, who protest that when they seek the Lord they will seek Him in their own way, without any fellow-mortal to conduct them, except

it be one whose services they have expressly asked for, and can discard at pleasure. We need not travel far for a fact in confutation of this view. The existence of the University confutes it, and of every College in the University. There are a good many men who stand between the Undergraduate mind and the truth whereof that mind is assumed to be in quest. They stand there, not to thwart or bar the way, but as aids and guides. Were it not for their mediation and their regulating control, we should have a herd, I cannot say of students, but of a few intellectual oddities, going silly over private study, on the one hand, and on the other, hundreds of what Herodotus (ii. 32) calls παῖδες ὑβρισταί,—or as Homer calls them, (Od. vi. 120), "violent and wild, not just either, or friendly to strangers:" they would make Cambridge a place unsafe for a peaceable man to come near, and their occupation would be anything but the worship of the Muses. Why so many men between my intellect and truth? To show my intellect the best way to truth, also to spur on my laziness not to loiter on the way. This is the office, this the need, of an academic polity, an organised body of teachers, and a code of scholastic law, in every multitude who profess to learn. And as without an academic polity, we should develop faddists and rioters, so without an ecclesiastical polity religion would be the occupation of a few fanatics of the Gifted Gilfillan type, and would be ordinarily neglected of the many.

Music may be styled, in Aristotelian phrase, a 'property' of human nature: but religion is of

the essence of humanity. An excellent man may be no musician: it is a pardonable defect: but a man wholly void of religion is undeserving of the name he bears, having obliterated in himself one main distinction between man and brute. Human nature is essentially religious. Again, it is essentially social. The dictum of Aristotle, that man is a 'social animal,' is received with applause in this age, when everything is done by companies and societies and boards and syndicates and leagues and governing bodies. Rousseau's 'noble savage' is ruled out of order and reality. Being essentially social, and essentially religious, man must carry his social habits into his religion. That is to say, man must form religious society, as he forms civil society. But there is no society without government, and no government without a polity. There must then be a religious society, or *ecclesia*, Church polity, ecclesiastical polity.

There is room for a great book on Politiology, or a description of the various polities that have actually existed, ancient and modern, civil and religious. Where men are left without revelation, it is necessary to create religious authorities by the side of the civil power, as was done with much elaboration in the Roman Republic, and in ancient Mexico, in India and Japan: I may mention also the Druids in this island. Two religions have been successively revealed from heaven, the Jewish and the Christian. In both cases the revelation has embraced, besides certain doctrines, also a certain religious polity. We may no more subvert the

government of the Pope and Bishops than we may deny the Trinity. If the one has been revealed by God, the other has been instituted by God. To controvert either is to rebel against God. Like every other government, the ecclesiastical polity instituted by the Divine Founder of our religion presses more upon those who in some manner hold office under it. I mean, the clergy are more governed and commanded and controlled than the laity. What binds the laity, binds the clergy: and for every Church precept binding priest and layman alike, there are two others binding the priest alone. No priest who fulfils the obligations of his state can be accused of laying burdens on others and not touching them with a finger himself. The yoke of ecclesiastical discipline and tradition is heaviest of all upon the Pope's shoulders. It is however a yoke and a felt reality to every Catholic layman. We say to those who think of joining us: 'Don't you become a Catholic, unless you are ready to be spiritually governed.' The warning is appropriate and just.

I make a point of avoiding Anglican controversy in these Conferences. If I proceed to institute a comparison between our Anglican friends and ourselves, it is not in any controversial spirit, but that we may learn by comparison to understand our own position better. I was thinking as I came along in the train yesterday how far the polity of the Church of England checks and controls the average Anglican layman. I concluded that he was not more checked and controlled by it than I was by

the Great Eastern Railway, which carries me once a week from London to Cambridge and back. If I elect to stay at home, the Company has no power to defeat that choice and insist on my travelling. No official of the Company will reproach me for the neglect. I shall not have to file an *aegrotat:* my absence is simply no affair of theirs. If I betake myself to King's Cross rather than to Liverpool Street or St. Pancras, the Great Eastern Company has nothing to say to my preference of a rival line. My need of travelling sends me to some station or other, but does not tie me to any: or where it does tie me, as in the not unfrequent case where one Company monopolises the route, still it is my private need, or inclination, not the Company's authority, that urges me to become their passenger. My house is my castle, which I can defend against any Company (unless they get a private Act of Parliament), and defy them to extract me thence. When I elect to travel by a certain line, I must first pay a small sum in contribution to working expenses: then I must take my seat 'meekly' (as the Anglican rubric has it) in the place provided for me according to the value of my contribution; and being there, I must not 'brawl,' or disturb my fellow-passengers: I must show my ticket, and surrender it on demand; and in certain places I must not smoke. Moreover, except at fixed intervals, I cannot well get out and go away. When at last I quit the premises of the Company, it is understood on both sides that the transaction between us is at an end. I appreciate the service that they have done me. I should be

sorry if any accident befell them. I should be concerned to see them bankrupt, disestablished, disendowed, or to find some day that their trains did not run, nor the Great Northern trains either. It was very good of them to take me, and very good of me to let myself be taken. They ought to be thankful for my custom, as I am thankful for their service. I criticise them and their performances freely; on the whole I much admire them: venerate them I do not. I pay them a limited and occasional obedience.

I will not weary you with the application of this parable. You see for yourselves how limited, how occasional, how pure an exercise of self-will, is the obedience which the average Church of England layman pays to his Church, or thinks that he ought to pay. True, the 'good Queen' who put that Church on its present footing intended things quite otherwise. There was to be one religion alone in the land, with Her Grace at the head of it. Men were fined for not resorting to the parish church on Sundays. The law was solicitous about the consumption of fish in Lent. There were articles of religion to sign, and declarations to make against other religions. Private religious rites, surrounded with all the secrecy of home, were pried into, and punished. But the nation had not broken from the Pope of Rome to obey other papal mandates issuing from Greenwich or Windsor. Under Elizabeth, began the long history of Protestant Dissent and the Nonconformist conscience. The effect of the movement called the Reformation, initiated in the

sixteenth century by the Crown, consummated in the seventeenth by the Long Parliament, has been the emancipation of the layman from the control of the Church. The ecclesiastical polity remained as Elizabeth had made it, but it became impotent to govern the people. And after an era of fanaticism, while Puritanism flourished, which was one form of religious anarchy, irreligion, the second and final form, has set in.

We see the multitudes in our large cities *scattered, as sheep having no shepherd* (Matt. ix. 36), like the multitudes whom our Lord compassionated. What these men want is governing: they need to be spiritually governed, not tyrannised over by that most odious of all tyrannies, a spiritual tyranny, but they need to be brought under His authority who is at once King and Saviour, who rules in order to save. His authority means the authority which He has established in His Church. It is vain to pretend that these multitudes are ruled by Conscience. Their conscience is benumbed by ignorance, all awry and contorted with false teaching and evil habits. At best, Conscience is not a perfect, distinct entity from the man whose conscience it is, and of itself it cannot rule him perfectly. Conscience needs to be informed and strengthened from without, by magistrate, moralist, preacher, and also by confessor, as Christ intended. The Sacrament of Penance is called 'the tribunal of conscience.' Conscience is there the accuser: the law there administered is the law binding the conscience of the individual: the absolution is an acquittal in

conscience. Every Catholic Christian, from the Sovereign Pontiff to the school-boy, kneels at the bar of that tribunal. There is no distinction of ranks there, as there will be none before the tribunal of God. The confessional is an essential feature of the Catholic Church polity. Never do we feel the hand of Church authority over us so sensibly as when we go to confession. Consequently, that great overthrow of Church authority, which styled itself the Reformation, had done nothing, had it not overthrown the confessional, substituting, for the benefit of timorous consciences, a voluntary consultation with a godly minister, who might afterwards pronounce an opinion of the pardon of the sin by faith in God's word. The logical position of the many zealous Anglican clergymen who are restoring, so successfully, the use of confession, would be far stronger, if they would but openly avow, what I fancy not a few of them think in their hearts, that the Reformation was a mistake, and they want to repair it. The Reformation really was a cry, *We will not have this man to reign over us* (Luke xix. 14) by the spiritual authorities which He has commissioned to represent Him: *we have no king but Cæsar* (John xix. 15; cf. xviii. 36, 37). The confessional is the restoration of Church authority, to the undoing of the Reformation. Accordingly, men who will not part with the liberty, or license, which their forefathers won, speak and write the language of anger and alarm at the re-assertion of the obligation of confession. Men who have never been to confession in their lives dilate with confi-

dence on the deleterious effects of confession, and point in proof to the moral degradation of Catholic populations who have given up the practice.

But I must not run into controversy. Members of that great *Universitas*, the *Universa Ecclesia*, the Catholic Church, we have every facility to approach God in private prayer, without which all our church-going would be an empty show; but our approaches to God are guided and stimulated by an efficient, working ecclesiastical polity, or form of Church government. We live, priests and laymen, under Church control: else we should not be Catholics. We feel that control in the confessional, we feel it in the commandments of the Church. A good Catholic may be defined as one who keeps the commandments of the Church. He will not neglect the commandments of God: or at least he will never break them without sorrow, and remorse, and repentance. Dear to you should be the Friday abstinence, and Sunday Mass, and the Church's conditions of holy Matrimony. Prophets of evil have foretold that a race of better scholars and more cultured men of the world, but of inferior Catholics, is likely to come forth from contact with our English Universities. I have ever set my face against such prophets, and denied their prophetic insight. I am confident that in you, the first generation of University-trained Catholics, Holy Church your Mother will find the harbingers of many to come after you, sons loyal and obedient to her commandments, and glorying in her wholesome control.

NOTE. — That the comparison with the Great Eastern Railway is no misrepresentation, see the Manifesto of the Church Association in *The Times*, 9 March, 1899, and the Letter of Mr. Cobham, Chairman of the Association, also Sir William Harcourt's Letter in the same issue. All these documents concur in describing the polity of the Catholic Church as it is described in this Conference. They confess that this polity obtained in England up to the Reformation. They show that the grand work of the Reformation was to subvert this polity, and liberate the layman from ecclesiastical, or 'spiritual,' control.

CONFERENCE XVI.

A RELIGION WITHOUT A CREED.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, 12 March, 1899.

THESE Conferences are not sermons. If they were, I might be at a loss for a Scripture text to suit the subject to-day before me. Holy Scripture never contemplates a religion without a creed. Turning to a profane author, I find a phrase very apt to introduce my subject. Plato, you know, never admired the democratical polity under which he lived at Athens. He writes accordingly: "Democracy is a fine region to seek a polity in, because, owing to the license that it affords, it contains all manner of polities. I really think, if any one wanted to found a city, he could not do better than visit some city enjoying a democratic constitution. Coming to such a bazaar of polities, he could pick out the style that pleased him, and found his city according to the selected variety. Yes, I dare say, he would find no lack of specimens" (*Republic* 557 D). England at the present day is a *παντοπώλιον*, or 'bazaar,' of creeds. And as Plato's ironical language meant that a democracy is not far removed from anarchy, so a modern observer might pronounce that England comes near to being

creedless. On the other hand, there is still a vast force of vague religious sentiment and strong spiritual yearnings in the country. This spectacle of a nation, loving religion and abhorring creeds, calls for our study.

Not a creed in the Catholic sense, because not held in dutiful submission to any authority, and not definitely formulated, but a substitute for a creed, that is winning favour all around us, may be drawn out in the following articles.

1. A vague recognition of something that may be called God, something the chief attributes of which are vastness and unknowableness, but which we may venture to describe as 'a power above man, making for righteousness.'

2. A belief in evolution and in the indefinite perfectibility of the human race.

3. A resolution to maintain morality on social grounds, and the authority of Conscience in the individual.

4. A respect and regard for Christ as man, the divinest and godliest of men, but not the Risen Jesus, and not God.

5. The Bible to be treasured up on the same shelf with Homer and Plato and Dante and Shakespeare, and subject to the same criticism.

6. A surmise of some sort of consciousness to continue after death. But for this surmise, which he professed to hold as a firm belief, the late Lord Tennyson once told a friend that he would at once throw himself from the top of a cliff on which they were standing.

7. (A negative article.) No Popery and no Sacerdotalism anywhere, least of all in any established Church.

Every positive creed must be negative too. To hold any article definitely and firmly, as of faith, is to anathematise some definite proposition, the logical contradictory of that article. But there may be a creed, or quasi-creed, principally negative, its strength consisting in certain firm denials. Such a creed cannot conduce to heaven: we cannot ascend thither upon a series of negations: but it may be a potent destructive force upon earth. Such was Mohammedanism, with its war-cry: 'There is but one God, and Mohammed is His prophet.' Meant at first as a protest against the polytheism predominant in Arabia, this cry came to mean that Jesus Christ was not God, nor even the chosen of all the prophets of God: it was the cry of a sort of militant Unitarianism. And multitudes who have scarce any positive belief at all, are trumpets of no uncertain sound to bray 'No Popery.'

Again we may consider creeds as emotional or dogmatic. The Catholic Creed is both one and the other, dogmatic first, and building up emotion on dogma. This is the work of ritual and of all the externals of religion. On the value of these external rites I enlarged two Sundays ago. I have only to say now that religion is lost, when it trusts to mere emotion and mere ritual, without definite dogmas and firmly held articles of faith. Without that basis, having only emotion to build upon, you cannot 'make a meditation,' you can only lapse into a reverie. I remember visiting Cambridge one fine afternoon at the end of August, and lapsing into a reverie on one of the bridges at 'the Backs:' who

could help it in such a scene of peace and loveliness, set in the repose of the Long Vacation? They were moments that I shall not forget, but not moments of choice and resolution. A reverie is not a practical thing: it does not determine to action, it throws no light on conduct, it begets no principle, it imparts no form to the will. A 'meditation' does all these things: I use the word as St. Ignatius employs it, and as it has become a technical term of religion among Catholics. Only upon a dogmatic creed can you make meditations; and meditations are the machinery of translation by which the force of religious spirit is brought to bear steadily and regularly upon conduct.

A religion without a creed has been compared to a body without bones. In such a body, there would be no point of attachment for the muscles, and consequently no orderly activity, nothing but idle palpitations. So without a creed, you have spasms of religious emotion; you cannot have a life methodically guided by religion. It is easy for an irreligious mind to be creedless. The irreligious mind is not *carried round by every wind of doctrine* (Eph. iv. 14), simply because it is fast anchored to the things of this world, and the breath of religion plays upon it in vain. Religious-minded people suffer for want of a creed. They are in the predicament that St. Paul describes. Their religious views are the views of the last novel they have read, or the last eloquent preacher that they have listened to, of whatever denominaton. And their views remain views, devoid of action, except now and

then an impulsive subscription to a purpose which they have not well considered.[1] Like the Athenians of old, with their policy of impulse, so fatal to empire, they are "slaves to every strange conceit suggested to them" (δοῦλοι ὄντες τῶν ἀεὶ ἀτόπων. Thuc. iii. 38). Like burrs, they go stuck on to the coat of the last energetic person who has made his way through their midst.

The first Christians called a creed, a σύμβολον, or 'watchword,' as we still call it a 'symbol.' When a religious teacher approached them, they put this watchword to him. If he gave the proper response, they accepted and listened to him. But if he was a stranger to the watchword, they, according to St. Paul's and St. John's advice, avoided him as a heretic (Titus iii. 10; 2 John 7—11). The use of a creed as a watchword or test well appears in these verses: *Brethren, believe not every spirit: but prove the spirits whether they be of God.* The proof is not by an exercise of critical faculties, or private judgment, but by comparison of the new teaching with the received tradition of faith, with the *symbol*, or creed. Thus. *Many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby is known the spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit which undoeth Jesus is not of God; and this is antichrist* (1 John iv. 1—3). The second article of the Creed, containing the doctrine of the Incarnation, was to be applied as a test to any one who came to lecture on the Incarnation;

[1] "The Englishman is puzzled, but still subscribes" (Lord Beaconsfield).

and so of the other articles. I insist on this, because you will sometimes hear from persons who ought to know better, that the early Church was not dogmatic, or that the New Testament does not enforce any creed. To such persons I should answer, *tolle, lege*. Take and read Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; John xiv. 26; xvi. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 12—14; 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; vi. 3, 4, 20, 21; 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18; Gal. i. 8; Col. ii. 8. Christ would have all nations brought to a state of discipleship: they are to hear all the message that He has left for them, and to that purpose the Holy Spirit is to bring back all the details of the message to the memory of the Apostles, and they are to teach the world: the Holy Spirit is to guide them to all truth, which supposes in their hearers a corresponding obligation to accept the truth: no Christian may disbelieve in the resurrection of Christ, or in the general resurrection: Hymenæus and others who made the resurrection of the body a mere moral renovation are denounced as a plague-spot in the Christian community; an angel from heaven is to be held accursed, if he teaches other doctrine than that which Paul has taught; Christians are not to be ensnared by philosophy. These are marks of a teaching body, definitive, authoritative, and assent-compelling. When heresies arose, as they speedily did, they were precisely stated, and met by the Church with precise counter statement. Each party claimed to have the truth, and accused the other of moral obliquity in departing from it. Protestantism, for the first century of its existence, condemned others as

vehemently as it was itself condemned. Protestants doubted whether Catholics could be saved. Creeds and confessions of faith and articles were made and remade and fought about. So much at least of the old spirit of the Church continued, that no Christian dreamt of such a thing as a creedless, undogmatic religion. For Christianity is a creed, or it is naught.

We must dissent then from the popular novelist of the day, who tells us that to "talk as though right belief were a blessed privilege and boon rather than a law and obligation," is "merely talking the natural Christian language of this generation." It is the language of this generation, to be sure, but to call it 'Christian' is a perversion of words. How can that be Christian, which is against the mind of Christ, and against the mind of all the professors of Christianity for sixteen centuries, to say nothing of the ever-abiding mind of the Catholic Church? Writers of fiction should not try to run with the hare of Christianity and hunt with the hounds of Higher Criticism. When they do become pagans, they should have the courage of their melancholy convictions, and avow that they are unfortunately enemies of the cross of Christ, have forsworn Christian allegiance, and abandoned Christian glories.

I believe it is going to blow hard in the religious world. Not that I exactly anticipate imprisonments and martyrdoms: we may not travel further than confiscation and exile on the road of violence. But I look forward to, indeed we already see on foot, a general revolt of human intellect against all authority

claiming to bind it in the name of God (cf. 2 Thess ii. 3—8). The sheer paganism of creedless religion inspires our leading newspapers and reviews: it is taught in school and university: it pervades all classes of society. On the other hand, Christianity is not dead, but heresies are perishing. Catholic truth is being uncovered to the public gaze, as on Good Friday the cross is uncovered and lifted up for all to see. Men are waking from the sleep of inadvertence, inconsistency, easy-going toleration and indifference, and are taking sides, for one definite creed as taught by Christ and His Church, or against all creeds whatsoever. A collision is preparing between these two contradictory tendencies of thought, and the shock, when it comes, will be tremendous. It will unseat and overthrow every believer, who does not understand his creed well, and cling to it with loving tenacity.

CAMBRIDGE EASTER TERM, 1899.

CONFERENCE XVII.

THREE JOYS OF EASTER.

Third Sunday after Easter, 23 April, 1899.

HAVE we any faith, any love for Christ our Lord? Yes, we have faith: our friends may make themselves quite easy about us on that score. We are no saints, but we are not heathens: we are baptized Christians: and so far as He will deign to allow us and to accept our love, we do love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then we can enter into the joy of the Church at this season. Easter is the pleasantest of University terms. But it is well that as our religion comforts us in sorrow, it should also chasten our joys by leavening them with some of the joy of the Lord, and of the Church His Bride. Holy Church now is almost boisterous in her

expressions of joy. In the Office of to-day, a fair specimen of a Paschal Office, I have counted 185 alleluias. On an ordinary day in the year the number is just 8. These alleluias are not the private devotion of the clerics who recite them: they are the cry of the whole Church in whose name they are said. They utter and declare your Christian joy. Easter is the making of every feast in the year. Without the Resurrection we are undone, we are *of all men most pitiable* (1 Cor. xv. 19). Good Friday, with no Easter Sunday following it, would destroy the Incarnation, and wreck the happiness of Christmas. It would make the Church an impossibility, as a headless body cannot possibly live, and the Church is headless without the living Christ. Thus there would be no Holy Ghost given to the Church, and no Pentecost. I need scarce observe, that if Christ were not risen and living, we could not have His Flesh and Blood in the Holy Eucharist: no Easter, no Corpus Christi. Easter Day is well called in the Martyrology *solemnitas solemnitatum:* it gives being to all other solemnities, and bears in its bosom all their joys.

Easter means that the Word Incarnate, God and Man, lives again, in glory for evermore. His glory is that of the Only-begotten of the Father. It was His from birth. At Christmas we called His name *Emmanuel, Wonderful, the Mighty God* (Isaias vii. 14; ix. 6). And He lay in a manger, with no visible sign of Godhead about Him, liable to all human wants. And He grew up in poverty and the labours of an artisan. Afterwards He went out

and showed His glory by miracles: but these displays of power were passing events: the lowliness and simplicity of His ordinary life was unaffected by them. He went beyond simplicity, plainness, and obscurity: He became hated and calumniated, persecuted and outraged: in the end He fell into the hands of enemies, they seized Him, scourged Him, nailed him to a cross, and there He died, forsaken apparently of God and man. Was this Emmanuel, God with us? The day of His Resurrection proved that it was. That day He was shown forth as the Son of God. To that day St. Paul applies the text of the second Psalm: *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee* (Acts xiii. 33). *This day* is not the eternity of His generation from the Father, for it is spoken to Him, not as God, but as Man. And although these words form the Introit of the Christmas midnight Mass, they do not in their proper sense point to His birth of the Virgin Mary. They are Easter rather than Christmas words: *this day* is the first Easter Sunday, and all succeeding Easter Sundays as commemorations of the first. This day, drawing Him forth from the tomb, and investing Him with the glory proper to His Divinity, the Eternal Father acknowledges His Son made man, proclaims Him and crowns Him equal to Himself, *immortal king of ages* (1 Tim. i. 17).

The chroniclers of Edward III.'s reign tell us how on the field of Crécy the king took post in the rear of the battle, and sent his son Edward the Black Prince, to lead the van of the army against

the enemy. The Prince was hard pressed in the fight, and sent to his father to come to his aid. "No," replied King Edward: "let the boy win his spurs." One can imagine, when the day was over, the king meeting his son, with the flush of victory on his boy's face, and how the royal father takes him by the hand and says to him: 'Now I know you for my son: this day you have proved yourself the heir of our house, a true Plantagenet.' You may take this example for what it is worth: but it has helped me to realise St. Paul's application of the text, *Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee.* This then is the first of Easter joys, the showing forth of Jesus Christ as God. St. Ignatius puts it thus: "the Divinity, which seemed to hide itself in the Passion, appears and shows itself now miraculously in the holy Resurrection by its true and holy effects." There are no such good tidings anywhere, there is no such cause of joy to man, as the declaration that Jesus Christ is God.

Again, St. Paul tells us, Jesus Christ is marked out Son of God by the resurrection of the dead (Rom. i. 4).[1] This tells of another joy of Easter, our resurrection from the dead; which resurrection is again a sign of the Divinity of our Redeemer. Yes, it will be a sign, when it happens: but how could St. Paul point to it as a sign in his day, when even to our time it remains a hope unfulfilled? Because the resurrection of Christ, the Head, carries with it the resurrection of us, His members. He is

[1] For some elucidation of this misunderstood and mistranslated text, see my *Notes on St. Paul*, pp. 294—6.

the first-fruits of them that sleep (1 Cor. xv. 20). It was *impossible that death should hold him* (Acts ii. 24), or that it should finally hold us who belong to Him. Death was overcome on Easter Day by Christ for Himself and for us: and though death has not yet yielded up his conquests, and daily conquers more and more, the enemy only conquers to give back again in the day when he shall be himself despoiled. *O death, where is thy victory?* (1 Cor. xv. 55). Daily won, it cannot last: death's final reverse is a foregone conclusion.

There are moments when we are weary of existence, and feel as though we should be glad if death and nothingness could devour us entirely, soul and body. Oftener, perhaps usually, we think that if only our soul can creep into some nook and corner of quiet happiness after death, it matters not what becomes of our poor body: let it perish, we have done with it, and are well rid of it. But, as I said in the last Conference of last term, God is a father who insists on providing for His child on an ampler scale and with greater magnificence than the child appreciates or desires. Naturally, the soul were well enough without the body, but not supernaturally. The resurrection of the body to glory is a gift given us in Christ. And a welcome gift too. None of us, I dare say, has gone through a long day of muscular exercise without reflecting on the wonderful strength and endurance of the human body, its energy and agility, when at its best. If it could only be maintained at its best! Then there is the beauty of the human form in

actual life, and in the creations of art, in sculpture and in painting, ancient and modern. Again, we think sadly how

> Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
> And delves the parallels in beauty's brow.

Sed mutabitur, says Seneca in a letter, after remarking on the good looks of a handsome slave. True, the ideal of art does not change, and the race remains: as one individual fades away, another flourishes in his stead. But the race is only a succession of individuals, one after another all fading and perishing, like the leaves of last year's spring. Artists have felt this sad recurrence of decay, and have preferred for subjects of their master-pieces either deities, who at least were immortal, if not otherwise very godly, or saints, the heirs of immortality and incorruption. The thought of the resurrection of the body should be an aid to the artist: it should exalt and purify his conceptions, and encourage him in the execution of them. There is in every face, if we could only catch it, a look which the wearer ought to wear, when raised to immortality. The look is more on the surface in youth, but it may be deepened and perfected by age. True idealisation catches that expression.

The disembodied spirit is not man, though it is probably all that would survive of man in the natural order. But for the resurrection of the body, the motive of the Incarnation assigned in the Nicene Creed, "for us men and for our

salvation," would come to this, "for our souls and their salvation." As it is, it would be heresy to substitute the second phrase for the first and proclaim it adequate. Christ is the Saviour of men, not merely of men's souls. He became man, and died, and rose again, to save our entire humanity. This is the second joy of Easter, a very human joy, that Easter involves *carnis resurrectionem*, the resurrection of our flesh.

I have not yet done with this our second joy. Hymenaeus and Philetas taught that the resurrection of the body was accomplished already (2 Tim. ii. 17, 18), in the conversion of men to Christianity. Their heresy consisted in the denial of any further resurrection of the flesh, once dead and buried and resolved into dust. The conversion of men from paganism to a Christian life is however the first stage of the resurrection of their bodies to glory. The flesh is partially glorified by being baptized. It is glorified by being sanctified, by being incorporated with Christ, by becoming the temple of the Holy Spirit of God. Therefore a baptized man, living up to the grace of his baptism, and avoiding in particular those sins *proper to the body*, or done *through the body* (2 Cor. v. 10) whereby baptismal grace is most easily and commonly lost,—such a one walks in the likeness of Christ risen (cf. Rom. vi. 4—12), and in him the resurrection of the flesh has already its initial accomplishment. In the multitude of such men, diffused through all ages and places since the planting of the Church, Jesus Christ is

shown forth as Son of God by resurrection of the dead (Rom. i. 4; Acts xxvi. 23; Eph. ii. 1—6; John v. 25), not as by an event fulfilled only in promise and potency, but by an event that has its fulfilment daily in the life of every good Christian. We have one and all of us the power of showing forth our Saviour as the Son of God by living in the likeness of His resurrection.

The third joy of Easter is the complement and corrective of a great sorrow. It is a great sorrow to think that Easter comes and goes, leaving such multitudes of men dead in their sins, and rotting away in their paganism. To them Easter has no spiritual significance; it is simply an occasion for a holiday, for a cheap trip, for a bout of self-indulgence beyond usual limits. The thought of this unhappy pagan world might be a great curtailment of our Easter joy, but for this consideration, that along with the fact of Christ's Resurrection the Apostles were further *commanded to testify to the people that this is he who is ordained of God to be judge of the living and of the dead* (Acts x. 42; cf. i. 11; iii. 21; xvii. 31; xxiv. 15). Everywhere the future Judgment was announced in the same breath with the recently accomplished Resurrection and Ascension. This means that Christ is made Head of all mankind; and will vindicate His Headship over all men, either with their free consent or in despite of their resistance. He comes forth from the tomb triumphant and resistless. *Not yet do we see all things subjected to him* (Heb. ii. 8): but *he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet* (1 Cor.

xv. 25). *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in the heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds with power and great majesty* (Matt. xxiv. 30). *And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day* (Isaias ii. 11, 17). This resistless might of the Saviour whom we love and whose honour we have at heart, is the culmination of our Easter joys.

"I will make all things well; and all things shall be well; and thou shalt see that I will make all things well." If we may trust the revelations of Mother Julian of Norwich, these words were often spoken by Our Lord to an anxious and enquiring English heart. He asks us to join hands with Him in making all things well. We all need encouragement: of all things we need encouragement most. We have the encouragement of His present victory, the earnest of a future conjoint triumph, His and ours. *Wherefore, beloved brethren,* concludes St. Paul as the moral of his discourse on the Resurrection, *be ye always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not vain in the Lord* (1 Cor. xv. 58).

CONFERENCE XVIII.

RELIGION IN THE MODERN NOVEL.

Fourth Sunday after Easter, 30 April, 1899.

I CANNOT agree with the proposition,—it seems to me not historically true,—certainly it is not according to the mind of the Catholic Church to say, that preaching was the invention of an age in which people read either not at all or with difficulty, and that in a reading age like ours sermons are out of place, unnecessary, and to be abolished. Holy Church is not likely to abolish them. The Church has ever attached special efficacy to the spoken word of God, so that, of two discourses equal in all other respects, we should expect the discourse uttered aloud by an authorised person from the pulpit to bear more spiritual fruit than the discourse read privately at home. If instead of coming here to address you, I had my Conference printed, and a copy posted to each of you on Saturday night, first, I should have grave doubts about your reading it: secondly, I say, the reading would not do you as much good as the spoken word, the text being the same: the reason is, because the word is not merely composed but spoken with authority. Those people

who complain of sermons are not conspicuous for diligence in spiritual reading; what they do read is the modern novel, and that often in great profusion. I am not here to attack novels, novel-reading, and novelists. The novelist is become a greater power perhaps than the preacher; and he sometimes usurps the preacher's office: we have the religious novel, and the anti-religious novel. Because contraries are in the same genus, as logicians say, we will call them both by one name, whether they labour to build up or to subvert religion: we will speak of both as the 'religious novel.' The religious novel, I fear, is not often a success. It supposes a combination that is rare. Either the novel or the religion is apt to be at fault. Where the former fails, the production is simply dull and harmless. But where the latter fails, where the genius of the novelist exists unwedded to any true understanding of religion, and yet religion is made the theme of the novel, the production may be commercially successful enough, but is morally dangerous, at least to the uneducated and untrained. It is of this dangerous variety of the religious novel that I wish to speak.

The danger of the uneducated mind is that of taking appearance for reality; of accepting for fact not what it has seen, but what it has fancied; of being led into captivity by rhetoric; of believing assertions because they are bold and startling. Such a mind unconsciously treats novels as the historian treats State-papers, builds up inductions on them, takes the sayings and doings there set down and

the characters there described, for the sayings and doings and characters of real men and women. The educated mind recognises fiction for fiction, and keeps it apart from history. I remember seeing the prospectus of a school, in which one of the subjects taught was 'handling wool.' Wool there was a staple of education: the boys were taught to discriminate one wool from another, better from worse. The lesson was truly educational, so far as it went. We should learn how to handle fiction.

The novel has after all an historical value. Though the particular characters and careers, which the novelist portrays, are fictitious, yet they represent, often faithfully enough, the sort of man that we meet with in real life, and the sort of things that he will say and do: thus we may improve our acquaintance with fact by reading fiction. We must remember that the novelist enjoys the licence of a caricaturist. As the comic papers reproduce the likenesses of our cabinet ministers with every feature exaggerated, so may the novelist exaggerate beyond anything that is found in the existing world. No clerical tutor in any Scotch family was ever quite so absurd as the immortal Dominie. Enough for Sir Walter Scott, that one or two specimens, whom he may have encountered, had some eccentricities pointing that way. Sometimes for humour, sometimes for pathos, sometimes to excite admiration, sometimes to inspire loathing, the novelist, and also the dramatist, may paint men better or worse, more whimsical, more unfortunate (if that is possible), than living men ever are.

But while we allow exaggeration and heightening of character, we must condemn inconsistency and psychological impossibilities. The freedom of the will is a limited freedom: it is checked by natural disposition, by acquired habits, by environment, by motives. We can predicate of ourselves and of our neighbours a hundred things that we might do in the abstract, but which any one who knows us can predict with moral certainty that we never shall do. This line of behaviour we are sure will never be assumed by a shy and reserved man, nor that by a virtuous man, nor that again by a niggardly man, nor that by a gentleman. Did we see him assume it, we should surmise that he had been drinking, or that his mind was giving way. All the value of the testimony of witnesses to character turns on the reliability of these judgments of psychological impossibility.

Here we have carefully to watch our novelist; and as a dissertation on novels in general is not my intention, nor even becoming in this sacred place, I say that the religious novelist must be particularly watched, not to keep him out of the pitfall, for he has taken his own course, but that we may not follow him in his fall into a psychological impossibility. I will take an example. The hero of a religious novel, whom we will call Titus Tatius, begins life as a firm believer in the Divinity of our Blessed Lord. Afterwards he abandons that fundamental point, and all profession of Christianity. Titus Tatius walks out at morn or dewy eve into the fields; he feels that Christ is near him, that he

is united with Christ, that he has found Christ the Man better for having renounced the Son of God. Now this, I venture to say, is simple nonsense. The feeling, if he has it, of Christ being near him is mere delusion, and will not last long. According to the new position which he has taken up, Christ is not near him, any more than Plato is near him: he is no more united with Christ than he is with Socrates. His denial of the Word made Flesh will augment neither his esteem nor his love of the Son of Mary: quite the reverse. The impressiveness of Christ in the gospels is the sense of something about Him more than human. Quench that sense by denial, and you have undone the gospels. Titus Tatius will presently deny the authenticity of the gospel record; and, apart from the gospels, what can he know of Jesus of Nazareth?

The old novelists of the Romance school, and the modern Penny Dreadful, treat us to a succession of startling events, murders, shipwrecks, fires, explosions, apparitions. The modern religious novelist harries us with a series of acute crises of feeling. Something is allowable on the score of the novelist's license to caricature: but the best novelists of all times have avoided these catastrophes of thought and of action. Sensational religion, not religion pure and undefiled, is the novelist's theme. Healthy religion flows on like a river, such a river as the Saône rather than the Rhone, to borrow Burke's comparison: but the religious novelist exhibits a succession of emotional cascades, shocks so violent as to exhaust the hero

and bring his life to a premature close. That there should be emotion in religion, I have argued in past Conferences: that emotion may properly grow intense and bring about an agony and a salutary crisis, is evident to readers of the story of St. Augustine's conversion. Still, religion does not consist of emotions; and emotional crises are dangerous things to pass through, and conduct quite as often to religious delusion as to religious truth. Yet such crises seem necessary for the interest of a religious novel. Another reason for reading novels of that class shrewdly and warily. Else, sharing the hero's excitement, we may come to be involved in his error.

The religious novelist, to borrow a phrase of the Anglican Bible, "sitteth in the seat of the scornful." He, or she,—for there are lady graduates in the art of religious novel-writing,—gives you to understand that he has the learning of a Doctor of Divinity, and more wisdom; that to him philosophy has given up its secrets; that he knows Hebrew and Greek and Assyriology and all other such *adminicula* to the critical study of the Old and New Testament; that for twenty years he has turned over the leaves of the Bible, and meditated and prayed upon its contents; that he is an adept in Church History, and has read through and through at least one of the great Fathers or Doctors of the Church; that he has also attended the sittings of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and weighed the evidence adduced there for sundry modern miracles. People who, at the cost of the labour of half a lifetime, have acquired a

handful or two of genuine knowledge of these matters, do not usually turn to novel-writing. But the religious novelist communicates unstintingly his treasures to the world, and that in a form which the half-educated will appreciate better than others whose insight has gone deeper. The intellectual strength of the Christian position indeed is considerable: to turn it, carry it, and take it altogether by storm, the novelist admits, requires long and elaborate argument: indeed the longer the argument becomes, and the more seriously it is undertaken, the further it seems to grow from being a refutation. But long and elaborate argument, the artist knows, cannot be inserted in a novel: that would be to kill the story and put in its place a tedious treatise. So 'results' are stated with a light and airy confidence, results destructive of the old faith in Christ: as for arguments, the surface alone is flashed upon the reader, like people show you gold at the top of a purse, and then withdraw it from view, giving you to understand that down to the lowest depths the bag is heavy with the precious metal. The argument stops exactly where the difficulty arises, and where the strength of the opposing system would begin to be felt, if the discussion were carried further. I am not complaining of this: the law of novel-writing imposes such limitations: novels cannot be abstruse. I only marvel at the folly of those who expect to upset Christianity by a novel in the mind of any educated man. I only commiserate their lame habit of thought, who surrender their faith to a novel.

In the department of Scripture studies I confess I am not greatly impressed with such phrases as 'No reasonable man can doubt,' 'the ablest German exponent,' &c. When I find the reasoning processes in certain passages of St. Paul's Epistles termed "the imperfect, half-childish products of the mind of the first century," I mentally move for a return of the number of hours of exact study which the author of that phrase has spent upon the fourth chapter of Galatians and the third chapter of the Second of Corinthians.

When a novelist undertakes to teach me, I look for his credentials. Often they are satisfactory enough. Sir Walter Scott as a young man roamed about the Lowlands on foot, conversing with the people, visiting their houses, gathering all the folk-lore of his native land. He read scores of ancient ballads with more avidity than he read law. He knew a good deal more of the Middle Ages than most men of his time. He shared with Shakespeare the power of piecing together ancient records and reconstructing historical characters. If you want to know old Scotland, and many other old lands besides, read Sir Walter Scott, and your general impressions will not be far wrong. Dickens and Thackeray knew London and London society, high and low. If the world lasts two thousand years more, Pickwick will be studied as we study Plautus, not for language and humour merely, but for what under all the exaggeration is there revealed of the living men of the time and their ways. And what are the credentials of the religious novelist? A

question to be asked in each several case as it occurs. St. Paul speaks of men, *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the testaments, having no hope of the promise* (Eph. ii. 12). St. John recounts this promise: *I will give him a white counter* (ivory *tessera*, or ticket, entitling to hospitality), *and on the counter a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it* (Apoc. ii. 17). And does not our Lord say: *Neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him* (Matt. xi. 27)? The sum is this, that faith in Christ is a special possession, a habit of mind which to them who have it not, and care not to come near it, is unknown and inconceivable. To borrow Newman's similitude, an outsider knows Christianity as you might know the stained glass windows in Great St. Mary's, studying them without and observing the contour of the figures, but never seeing them from within the church. You might be learned in the history of the windows, and the subjects which they represent, but you would be no judge of their artistic merit.[1] Or, like some civilians, you might have a passion for military history. With the amplest text and the most precise maps, you might follow the campaigns of Hannibal and Caesar, of Belisarius, of Montecuculi and Prince Eugene and Marlborough and Napoleon and Wellington and Lord Kitchener, and then vent your learning upon a private in the line, who had carried his rifle in Afghanistan. You would

[1] "They, as it were, see the tapestry of human life on the wrong side of it" (Newman, *University Sermons*, xiii.).

overwhelm the man with erudition, and at the same time reveal your ignorance of the actual workings of war. That comparatively uneducated man would have the better of you in military matters, because Tommy is a soldier and you are not. You too, inasmuch as you are an enrolled soldier of Christ, have the better in all practical religious issues of those who have never been in that service, whatever their learning. And the religious novelist is not always even learned.

If you are to read religious novels, read them with the caution of the old Doric poet whom Cicero loved to quote:

νᾶφε καὶ μέμνασ' ἀπιστεῖν, ἄρθρα ταῦτα τῶν φρενῶν.[1]

Read them as one *wise in Christ* (1 Cor. iv. 10).

[1] Be sober-minded, and remember to withhold your confidence: these are the pivots of good sense.

CONFERENCE XIX.

THE EXPECTANCY OF FAITH.

Fifth Sunday after Easter, 7 May, 1899.

SOME justification I feel is required both of my title and of my subject this morning. For the word 'expectancy' I appeal to Shakespeare: "Every moment is expectancy of more arrivance." By 'expectancy' I mean a state of expectation. Into such a state faith puts us, and keeps us expectant of another world and another life, according to the definition: *Faith is the substance*, or presentation, or bodying forth, *of things hoped for* (Heb. xi. 1). But this expectancy is more proper to a man getting on in years, as I am, than to those like yourselves, just entering upon life. I seem to have invited you from your own ground on to mine. My justification is my hope that on my own ground I may be better able to entertain you.

Am I rash in presuming that there may be among you a copy of the *Imitation of Christ*, which is read occasionally, five minutes at a time? No better spiritual reading, after the New Testament. The book was written in the cloister by an aged or aging man, and I cannot expect you to enter into

all its sentiments except in some very transient mood. Take these two examples: "Whatever I can desire or think of for my consolation, I expect it not here but for the time to come" (iii. 16): "It is all a burden to me, whatever this world offers in the way of consolation" (iii. 48). Now you find consolation in many of the good things of this world, and many such things you look forward to enjoying. And quite right too, *only in the Lord* (1 Cor. vii. 39), according to His law. But in time, as God is preparing to take you from this world, He will gradually wean you from these things of earth, and make your aspirations centre more exclusively on Him. And doubtless there are moments of disenchantment even in the golden hours of youth, in which your heart goes out with longing to a better world. Expectancy of some sort is in the very nature of man. Rarely are we wholly plunged in enjoyment of the present, like boys enjoying a summer holiday. Boys at school look forward to the University: at the University you look forward to your degrees and to the careers that you destine for yourselves: officers and functionaries of all kinds have an eye to future promotion. They do not look forward, who have no prospect but the workhouse and a pauper's grave. They do not look forward, who have no time to think, quite overwhelmed and overborne in the struggle for daily bread. But these are unnatural conditions. Thought naturally runs ahead of the present position of the thinker. Thought cannot be confined to this world. And here we must be careful in our reckoning, not

too much to vilify and circumscribe the cogitations of the poor. *He that approacheth God must believe that he is, and that he is a giver of reward to them that seek him* (Heb. xi. 6). This indispensable element of religion has been well planted in past ages in the hearts of our poor: except so far as their betters have untaught them, they still look to a reward after death. From the dealings of Providence in this world alone, *man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred: because all things happen alike to the just and the wicked, to the good and the bad* (Eccles. ix. 1, 2). In the next world, the reward will be given, amply and evidently, apart from favour and interest, irrespectively of birth and education and wealth. This conviction of justice to be done one day by a Supreme Judge has for generations borne up the hearts of our English poor. May be, they may not prove so tolerant of the unequal distribution of this world's goods, when they shall come to lose their belief in a God who will finally deal with every man according to his personal deserts. This is *the patience of the poor* (Ps. ix. 19).

Furthest from any such patient expectation of judgment to come are the class of the active and prosperous rich. Men of this stamp are often immersed in this world at sixty, and regardless of any other world shortly to receive them. Judgment goes in their favour at present, and they have no thought of ever seeing it reversed. These are the least religious of mankind, and, spiritually, the most thoughtless. These are your true pagans. The true pagan is of a lower grade than Brahman,

Buddhist, or Mohammedan. Those religions furnish expectations, however distorted, of a life to come, to many of their votaries a matter of extreme interest and a main object of endeavour. The true pagan erects a stone wall before his eyes, to prevent his looking over the margin of this earth. When he dies, he turns his face to this wall, and so passes away. The game is up, the brave show is over, the world has served his turn. As he perishes, so shall every man, so shall the entire race perish; and some day humanity shall be no more. Such is his philosophy. It is difficult for a thoughtful man to be quite a pagan. A self-complacent and contented pagan he cannot be. We should say, the immortal spirit within him spurns the idea of annihilation, and dreads a futurity for which no provision is being made. Among all thinking men you find a restless solicitude about 'dreams' that may come to trouble 'that sleep of death,' about the possible adventures of a spirit surviving in 'that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns.'

In this solicitous speculation we see 'free thought' at its weakest. By 'free thought' I mean thought pursued for the exercise and delight of thinking, holding results attained to be of importance quite secondary to the process of enquiry, and spurning all claims of authority to guide one to truth. I do not deny the interest of free thought, nor its value as mental exercise. Hare and hounds in a paper-chase do not care where they run: enough for them a good scamper over the country, a full satisfaction

of the appetite of muscular exercise, the healthiest and most innocent of the appetites of man. In many regions free thought is as innocent as Hare and Hounds, or Football. Let us have free thought by all means as to the composition of the Milky Way. Mankind will be none the worse for wild speculation upon nebulas. But when a physician approaches my bed-side, where I lie hovering between life and death, it is not his thinking power that I am chiefly interested in, not his ingenuity, not his adventurous daring: I hope he has got hold of the facts of my case, as they really are. I am anxious that the conclusions of his science be true: provided they be true, I do not care in the least how he has attained to them, whether by his own researches or by docile acceptance of the word of another. Here, where my life is at stake, I had rather my physician were right with Maccus and two old women than that he erred with Plato and the whole Royal Society. Even so it is with the prospect of a life to come beyond the interference of death. Results here are valuable, and results alone, the bare, sheer, sober truth, howsoever attainable: however humiliating be the process to our pride of intellect, we must creep, if need be, on hands and knees rather than err from the way of eternal salvation and stumble into hell.

The value of Christianity to a thoughtful mind is the definite and assured teaching which it provides in this way of eternal salvation. Christianity is a systematic method of saving our souls. That is its great aim and purpose, proclaimed from the first.

Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Where thy treasure is, there shall thy heart be also (Matt. vi. 20, 21). *The expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God* (Rom. viii. 19). *He* (Abraham) *looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. They* (the patriarchs) *desire a better country, that is, a heavenly* (Heb. xi. 10, 16). *For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek for one to come* (Heb. xiii. 14). These were the thoughts of the Martyrs, as their Acts testify. These were the thoughts of the dwellers in monasteries, as the annals of monasticism abundantly reveal. I speak particularly of English monasticism, in which the prominence given to the idea of the joys of the life to come is very remarkable. They are the thoughts of the Church of all ages, and our own thoughts as Christians and Catholics.

We look for good or evil to follow upon our course through this world, according as we conduct ourselves, either way on an immense scale. We are not certain of our perseverance in good: we dread our own frailty and possible prevarication, and the punishment that would fall upon us if we died in sin. Yet on the whole we look forward cheerfully, even with longing desire, to the next world, as to the home of our everlasting happiness. This cheerfulness is grounded, not on our own merits and innocence, though we know that to avoid evil and do good are necessary conditions for us to fulfil; but our confident hope of eternal salvation rests on the mighty means of sanctification which we possess in the Sacraments of the Church, and are determined

ever faithfully to use. A Catholic loses his soul by ignoring or making light of the next world. If he does not make light of it, if his thoughts run a great deal on what is to happen to him after death, it hardly can be that he will not make use of the means that the Church affords him, and the directions which the Church gives him, for securing his eternity; and using these means, and obeying these directions, he looks forward to eternity in the cheerful hope, that though *weeping stay to the evening* of life, yet *in the morning shall come gladness* (Ps. xxix. 6).

Thus the Christian life is a double life. *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are modest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute, every virtue, every praiseworthy observance* (Phil. iv. 8), all these things come back upon us, not as mere memories of a vanished past, but as treasures laid up in everlasting store. The young look forward in life, the old look back upon it: the young dwell in imaginations, the old in memories and recollections. But it would be unspeakably sad for an elderly man revisiting old scenes in thought, still more in bodily presence, did he not expect to regather in a better life all good things that he had seen there, all the good that he had done there, the loved ones that he had known there, yes and the sufferings that he had there endured.

A good subject for an essay, which I am not going to write at present, would be the effect of the expectancy of faith upon the temporal wellbeing of mankind. It strikes me in reading history that the

people who have retarded even material civilisation and progress have not been churchmen and monks and pious Christians as such, but wild and factious nobles, profligate democracies, and churchmen unfaithful to the Church and turned into lovers of this world. If we want to be happy in the next world, we must serve God in this: now we serve God by doing our duty at our post in human society, cherishing and loving our fellow man. There is hardly a more unworldly and heavenly-minded Saint in the calendar than the great St. Basil. Yet this is what St. Basil did at Caesarea. Around the cathedral and the bishop's house he built other houses for the clergy, who were required to furnish hospitality to visitors: there was an infirmary and medical school: a home for the aged (not a workhouse): there were special quarters for lepers: there were workshops, where even fine art was not neglected. These buildings were so extensive that the bishop was denounced to the governor of the province for building a rival city: years after his death it still bore the name of the Basiliad. When famine came, Basil collected subscriptions, bought provisions, and fed the poor, waiting upon them himself.[1] The story of Basil and the Basiliad has been repeated in cathedrals and monasteries without number, and is still re-enacted in our days.

I should propose as the subject of another essay, the effect upon human character and upon human happiness in this world of a total abolition of the

[1] *Saint Basile* par Paul Allard (Lecoffre, Paris, 1899) pp. 60, 61, 110, 111.

Christian expectancy of faith, and a general acquiescence in the prospect of man's dying like a dog. Horace, poor benighted pagan, should then be re-edited:

> *Omnis moriar, nullaque pars mei*
> *Vitabit Libitinam.*
>
> All I shall die: not any part of me
> But what shall fall to undertaker's care.

The effect I anticipate would be the loss of all the pathos, softness, etherialness of life, and the reign of vulgarity and selfishness supreme. The reason why this effect is not yet apparent in many men who have resigned all idea of a future life, is because they are influenced by the society around them, and the tone of that society is kept up by believers in immortality.

The belief in the immortality of the soul and in the ultimate resurrection of the body, like other fundamental beliefs of Christianity, is getting more and more dependent upon the continued existence and presence amongst us of the Catholic and Roman Church. Thinking men are finding that out. If only men could think more and knew more, Catholicism would spread fast. Man cannot abide being a mere animal; and the alternative is becoming clearer between mere animalism and Catholicism.

Note.

I append two quotations. The first is from Mark Pattison (*Suggestions on Academical Organisation*, p. 329):—

"A Christian looks for a life beyond this life, and

thinks that no theory of education can be perfect, which does not take account of that hope."

Whether by "a life beyond this life" the peculiar Christianity of the writer meant the inner life of the soul and mind, the "speculative life," as Aristotle called it, as lived in this world, or whether he meant a life continued on the other side of the grave, I cannot determine. But surely the former life furnishes some argument at least of the latter.

And these are the significant concluding words of Mr. Lecky's *History of Rationalism:* "But when we look back to the cheerful alacrity with which, in some former ages, men sacrificed all their material and intellectual interests to what they believed to be right; and when we realise the unclouded assurance that was their reward, it is impossible to deny that we have lost something in our progress."

CONFERENCE XX.

FALSE PROPHETS.

Sunday within Octave of Ascension, 14 May, 1899.

In speaking, according to my Easter programme, of false prophets, I do not mean people who undertake to foretell the future and are wrong in their predictions. There is no danger from such charlatans. I take 'prophet' in the sense of 'spokesman'; and by 'false prophets' I understand persons who, uncommissioned, make themselves spokesmen on God's behalf, and misrepresent the things of religion. God says by the mouth of Jeremias: *I have heard what the prophets say that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed: yea they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart* (Jer. xxiv. 25, 26). And again: *And it shall come to pass, when any one shall yet prophesy, his father and mother that begot him shall say to him, Thou shalt not live, because thou hast spoken a lie in the name of the Lord; and his father and mother shall thrust him through, yea his parents, when he prophesieth* (Zach. xiii. 3). Following, as He habitually does, in the traces of the Old Testament, Our Lord says in the Sermon on the Mount: *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the*

clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves; by their fruits you shall know them (Matt. vii. 15, 16). That Sermon lays down the essential points of Christian conduct; and among them is registered for all time this caution against false prophets. These prophets came *in the garments of sheep:* they are not outwardly *wolves*, or enemies to Christianity and Theism: but, as St. Chrysostom observes, "whatever is of the sheep in them stops at the skin." Inwardly they are wolves of the most dangerous type, because they approach unperceived to devour.

It is a dangerous responsibility to address mankind on matters of religion. The speaker must look to it that he be not earning the reward of the false prophet, that he be not a wolf in sheep's clothing. He must consider whether he bears the commission of the Church appointed to teach all nations, or at least whether he speaks to the mind of that Church, or furthers her advance. I say, it is a perilous thing to prophesy, or to interpret to mankind God's thoughts about men.

We know false prophets *by their works*. And first, by their deeds, which however it is not commonly given to us to pry into and judge of. Secondly, as Newman said, "such men are known by their disciples," by the effect of their teaching on those who are swayed by it. Best of all, we may know the false prophet by the effect which his words are beginning to have on ourselves. If I find my conscience sent to sleep, my horror of evil-doing lessened, my faith weakened, my interest in the

Church cooled, the barriers shaken and undermined between my soul and sin, as the result of any man's religious teaching, I have reason to judge that I have been listening to a false prophet.

As St. John says: *many false prophets have gone abroad into the world* (1 John iv. 1), some with more, some with less of sheep's clothing about them. I propose to take notice of one pseudo-prophetic cry, which happily we do not hear raised against the Church at home, but in foreign lands, the cry of Clericalism. I suppose it is the strong position held by the clergy of the Established Church in the Universities and throughout England, that saves them and their friends, and Catholics along with them, from the opprobrium of the name of Clericals. It always strikes me that there is a certain cowardice in the use of the name. If one is no believer in Christianity, and cannot hold his tongue, and will be aggressive, why not attack Christianity openly? If one is an enemy to Christianity, why not call that 'the enemy'? Why rail against Clericalism, when it is the maxims of Christ and of the Gospel that one really hates? Julian the Apostate and Voltaire were more honest opponents: they hated their Redeemer and his work, and they had the unhappy courage to say so. But there is a design in the name. It aims at a separation of the two orders which constitute the Catholic Church, the clergy and the laity, than which separation nothing could be more fatal. Such separation would make the Bride of Christ a leper: for is it not in leprosy that the flesh falls off from the bones? And what are the

flesh and bones of the Church but the laity and the clergy? We read in children's tales of walking skeletons: but a walking skeleton, you know, is an impossibility: how can the bones bend one upon the other when they are not clad in contractile muscle? Ossification is a disease of old age: it denotes decrepitude, and in certain cases, sudden death. The clergy, left to themselves to constitute the Church, would be a senile and dying body. On the other hand, the laity by themselves would be like some large animal without skeleton either internal or external, all muscle and no bone, an idle lump of flesh, good to eat possibly, but destitute of activity, there being no point of attachment for the muscles. So a laity without a clergy would be left without contact with the supernatural, such contact as Christ intended. There would remain to them only two Sacraments, Baptism and Matrimony. All supernatural authority to teach and govern would be absolutely lost. Thus the kingdom of Christ on earth would be dissolved. The Son of God became man to sacrifice Himself for mankind, and to govern mankind spiritually in order to their eternal salvation. When *he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight* on Ascension Day (Acts i. 9), neither His priestly nor His royal office were to perish from the earth. He put them both in commission, and He gave the commission to His Apostles and their successors for all time. That was the only ordinary way possible for Him to reign on earth. Government is carried on by means of what we call 'Services,' as the Army and Navy

and Civil Service. The clergy are the Spiritual Service: through them Christ is effectually King and Priest in this world. Without them, Hobbes's shrewd and wicked theory would come true, that Christ has no kingdom on earth, and shall not reign on earth until the day of judgment—when perhaps He can no longer be kept out of His kingdom.

If then by 'Clericalism' any one means the power and authority of the clergy in spiritual matters, and in temporal matters also so far as they directly and immediately involve spiritual interests, we can only say that Clericalism was initiated on earth by our Risen Redeemer, and confirmed by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and must somehow endure, as the Church endures, to the end of the world. But if Clericalism means the isolation of the clergy, so that they are to go one way, while the laity fall off in another direction, Clericalism is the direst disease with which the enemies of the Church could wish to see her stricken. In the concord, union, and harmonious intercommunication of the two orders of clergy and laity, the Catholic Church finds her vigour, vitality, and perpetuity.

And therefore, to speak my own private sentiments in a matter on which I have no right to speak for any one but myself, I rejoice to see the beginnings now made, here and at Oxford, of a University education for our clergy, secular and regular. University men understand one another. As a class, they have the ear of the English people, as other classes of speakers and writers have it not.

From a common basis of scholarship and culture they grow up together, to part afterwards in the studies of their several professions, divinity or engineering, medicine or teaching in schools. But in later life they can always meet on common ground, intellectual and social, and converse and agree and act together. For the time to come, further into the future than our conjecture can travel, you and generations of young Catholic laymen succeeding you will come up term by term to this University and to Oxford. You will afterwards, at least you should be, and I hope you will not shrink from your post, be leaders among the laity, in whatever land your life is cast, but particularly here in England. God keep His chosen people in this land from the misery of a separation in mind and heart between our laity and our clergy. May clergy and laity keep pace with one another, understand one another, co-operate with one another. May the one be not above listening to representations: may the other submit in season to take rebuke, and bear that measure of restraint which belongs to the obedience of faith.

The union on which I insist implies duties and rights on both sides. I am not here to instruct you in your rights: and it is at a clergy retreat, rather than at an academical conference, that one should draw out the manifold duties of priests towards their lay brethren. It is in my place to tell you something of your duties towards the clergy, who are in spiritual matters the governing and teaching order in God's Church. The idea of being governed

and taught does not commend itself to the first impulse of our nature. Our first impulses continually rebel against authority, as they rebel also against reason. No man likes the first mention of perpetual discipleship in the things of the intellect and of the spirit, that highest region of human activity. The more capable we are of climbing in that region, the harder in one respect does it become to submit to be led and guided,—the harder, yet also the more necessary, for there is danger of a heavier fall. On the other hand there is this in favour of docility, that at a greater height we better discern the danger, and know how easy it is to slip and err. The less wary thinker is often the more indocile, and feels less need of a guide. However there is no leisured and educated man, priest or layman, in these days, who does not require to keep sounding in his heart those words of our Master, who came on earth to teach us, who died to save us, and yet will neither teach nor save us except in His own masterful way and on His own peremptory terms: *Whoever doth not receive the kingdom of God like a little child, shall not enter into it.* (Luke xviii. 17; Matt. xviii. 3; Mark x. 15). A little child is teachable and amenable to correction, and does not chafe at authority exercised over it. A little child relies on the superior wisdom of other minds than its own. A little child is willing to be told things. Enviable is the lot of a little child under good instructors. But it can only profit by the good that encompasses it on condition of being a true child, teachable, corrigible, and believing. There is

no other way to heaven than the way of the little child, a way untrodden of our *false prophets* and of the disciples whom they lead after them.

Our Lord has not bidden us become as little children without providing us with a good instructor. The Church exercises authority over us in two ways: one is the way of enactment, disciplinary and provisional; the other is the way of definition, doctrinal, infallible, and final. The exercises of infallibility are rare: when they occur, the definition follows the tradition that we were taught in childhood and have always held to be of faith. The *obedience of faith* (Rom. xvi. 26) in us is tried, not by infallible definitions of dogma, but by the disciplinary prohibitions emanating from the Roman Congregations to which the Pope deputes his authority. His infallibility he cannot depute; and therefore no Congregation can rule a point of doctrine without possibility of error. We are bound in conscience to silence, when silence is imposed on us by a Sacred Congregation; and if we are thoroughly loyal, ours will be a cheerful silence. Secondly we are bound, even as to our internal assent, to regard the decree as a *grave praejudicium*, a very serious motive for retracting any position that we are not quite certain of, and for severely reconsidering, and re-examining with some suspicion, the grounds of any position of which we had thought ourselves certain,—all this, though we be men of European celebrity and vast erudition, quite a match intellectually (which some of us are not) for the experts who advise the Roman Congregations. Observe,

I speak of the decree of a Congregation, not of the ruling of a Pope *ex cathedra*, which binds our assent absolutely. The view that we have put forward may be true, but inopportune, and under present circumstances liable to create misconceptions. It may be true in substance, but imperfect in expression. And it may very easily be downright false. The newest and most up-to-date criticism is not necessarily correct. Criticism is continually undoing criticism. Much of the criticism of twenty-five years ago is as obsolete as the crinolines that were then in fashion. The Church is cautious, conservative, suspicious of novelties: that is the bounden attitude of the guardian of the treasure of truth. There are many thieves prowling round that treasure, many false prophets, vast hallucinations even in scientific circles. A true theory will take no harm for waiting outside the Pope's gate for a year or two. It will have a constitution strong enough to stand the chill. It will not melt away for a little cold water thrown upon it.

A mark of a true Catholic is a great confidence in the Church. The Church may well say to us what our Lord said to His Apostles: *Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me* (John xiv. 1). And again: *Have confidence, I have overcome the world* (John xvi. 33). To shake our confidence in the Church is the effort of false prophets. The world is changing rapidly: the Catholic Church should change to keep pace with it, they say; and they add, she does not keep pace with progress and probably cannot: her theology

is obsolete, her history uncritical, her philosophy no true science: her administration is corrupt and feeble: her policy obscurantist. She must either alter her whole attitude, and be guided by the prophetic insight of these modern seers; or she must retire into the desert, and become the asylum of the half-witted, the harmlessly fanatical, the stupidly pious, the mildly insane. With these prophecies in the air, the Church will celebrate the jubilee of 1900. We have the records of a jubilee four centuries ago. Cambridge was then what we are now told is a contradiction in terms, a Catholic University. The Blessed Sacrament was enshrined in Ely Cathedral: Mass was said in Peterborough Minster: the Archbishops of Canterbury and York each bore the title of *legatus natus* of the Apostolic See. All Western Europe was Catholic. Yet, to the pilgrims who flocked to Rome in the year 1500, sorrow and discouragement was presented, much greater than any that we have cause to feel. Infamy had invaded the Papal Court, and even the Papal Chair. No wonder that schism followed, and heresy, and religious revolt. The wonder is how the Church survived, how she reformed abuses within herself, how she proved fertile of great saints, how neither Reformation nor Revolution has destroyed her, how at the end of this changeful nineteenth century still she lives. Well may we Catholics be proud, that *strength and beauty are* still *the raiment* of our old Mother (Prov. xxxi. 25): that the lapse of four centuries has rendered the Church at least not less holy, not less true to the word of her Founder under

Leo XIII. than she was under Alexander VI.: that she alone is emancipated from the dead hand of antiquity, and is clothed with living, speaking authority: that she is not a Church of apologies, but of dogmas and of discipline: that she rules and regulates and possesses the land, and is not eternally fumbling for title-deeds. Surely that is the habit of a *domina gentium* (Lam. i. 1), an imperial *mistress of nations*, alike in the temporal and in the spiritual order.

CONFERENCE XXI.

MIRACLES, THEIR PLACE IN THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

Whitsunday, 21 May, 1899.

"MIRACLES do not happen." The statement has the merit of plainness, if not of truth. To establish it would be to subvert Christianity, which is founded, first, on the miracles of Christ our Saviour, more particularly His Resurrection and Ascension; secondly, on the miracles done by the Apostles as evidence of their mission. The Church's life began with the miracle of Pentecost; and in the first age the giving of the Pentecostal gift was always accompanied by a display, more or less abundant, of miraculous powers. See Acts x. 44—46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. If it is true for all time that miracles do not happen, then Church and Bible are false. Therefore I may meet the statement briefly and peremptorily thus: 'Don't tell me that miracles do not happen; it is heresy: my faith assures me of the contradictory.' I may also proceed by the roundabout process of disputation, and demand a proof of this universal negative proposition. I do accordingly demand a proof, and

further, a proof in syllogistic form. Even though the syllogism be not the type of reasoning, it is at least, as Mill allows, "the test of reasoning." The power of reducing your own, or your adversary's position, into syllogistic form is one of the greatest natural safeguards against deception. Syllogistically, these are the proofs forthcoming for the thesis, that miracles do not happen.

I. What I have never seen, does not happen. But I have never seen a miracle: therefore.

II. A violation of nature's laws does not happen. But a miracle is a violation of nature's laws: therefore.

III. What is never attested by other than incompetent witnesses, does not happen. But a miracle is never attested by other than incompetent witnesses: therefore.

The third syllogism must stand over for next Sunday's Conference. The first syllogism will not detain us long: the second will be our main theme of discussion this morning.

We admit the minor premise of the first syllogism. I suppose none of us has ever witnessed a miracle. Nay, we have no hankering after miracles. We had rather merit the blessing of those *who have not seen, and yet have believed* (John xx. 29). Miracles, we know, are *a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers* (1 Cor. xiv. 22; c. John iv. 48; Matt. xii. 39). The sight of miracles is not part of the ordinary providence of salvation: the main high road to heaven is good enough for us. But as for the major premise, it perishes as soon as it is born to light.

It reminds one of some rhymes put in the mouth of a celebrated Oxford man:

> Whatever is, I know it;
> What I don't know, isn't knowledge;
> And I'm the Master of this College.

Therefore the defendants of the position are careful to leave this premise unstated: 'whatever is, I know it.' An interesting specimen of the numerous group of Fallacies of suppressed major.

The usual method of meeting the second syllogism is to allow the minor, and deny the major premise. Thus Cardinal Newman:

> I firmly believe that saints in their lifetime have before now raised the dead to life, crossed the sea without vessels, multiplied grain and bread, cured incurable diseases, and superseded the operation of the laws of the universe in a multitude of ways.[1]

You must not be shocked, you must wait till all explanations are given, and then judge. I am prepared to let pass the major that a violation of nature's laws does not happen, and deny the minor. I say that a miracle is not a violation of nature's laws. I explain my meaning by a story. Call it a legend, if you will: I only want it for an illustration. St. Joseph of Cupertino, I think it was, the Conventual Franciscan friar, worked so many miracles, and drew such crowds, as to disturb the peace of his convent. The Father Guardian therefore put the Saint under obedience not to work any more

[1] *Present Position of Catholics*, Lect. vii. § 8. I could wish Newman's §§ 7, 8, read in here.

miracles without his permission. One day Joseph was watching a building, when suddenly he saw a man slip from a high scaffolding. He wanted to save the man; at the same time he could not think of being disobedient; so in his simplicity he cried to the falling man: "Stay where you are, till I run and get leave for a miracle." The story goes on that the man's body remained suspended in mid air, till Joseph reappeared with the requisite permission, and took him softly down. If the body did remain in mid air, it was a great miracle. That is the one point that we need of the narrative.

If the man had fallen from the same height into an outstretched and yielding sheet, he might have taken no harm: the force of gravitation would still have tended to drag him to the earth, but would have been counteracted by the resisting medium of the canvas. Substitute for that medium some sustaining angel: gravitation acts as before, but this time there is an angel counteracting it, a miraculous support, procured at the intercession of a Saint. But for all that there is no violation of any law of nature in this case any more than in the former. In both cases the equilibrium procured is the mechanical resultant of all the forces acting upon the body. The one peculiarity of the miracle is the intervention of a hyperphysical force. I call it 'hyperphysical' to denote the source from whence it proceeds; for angels are not in the purview of physical science. But if we consider the term upon which the force acts, namely, the man's body, in that view the sustaining power of the angel works a

physical effect exactly the same as that of a piece of sustaining canvas. There is no law of physical nature, that hyperphysical forces, such as angels, or God Himself, shall never interfere. Were there such a law, human activity would have to be brought down into the category of mere physical action. The design of King's College Chapel, Paradise Lost, Newton's *Principia*, would be physical effects, belonging to the same order as earthquakes. Milton and Wellington would be complicated mechanisms, curiously constructed clocks, ticking out poetry, or orders of the day for battle. This is one way of abolishing miracles, and much else besides. It is a sort of philosophical chauvinism, reducing all agents and agencies to one dead level.

We contend for a hierarchy of agents, mechanical, chemical, electrical, vital, sensitive, intelligent; and again, human and angelic: and above all, divine. These agents work one above another, not superseding but checking one another. They have their several laws and established modes of action, which are not violated, but the action of one may be counteracted by the action of another, and so the course of events is altered from what it would have been, and yet no law is broken.

There were two worlds in the Platonic philosophy, the Intelligent world and the Visible world, or the world of Ideals and the world of Sensible Appearances.[1] The world of Ideals, of ideal Beauty

[1] See the conclusion of the sixth book of Plato's *Republic*, and the opening of the seventh.

and ideal Equality and ideal Good, and so of the rest, was said to be the world of Realities: the world of sensible experience was the world of Shadows, poor, fleeting, imperfect copies of those eternal Ideals. I am not concerned with explaining or defending this doctrine. But it was not wholly false; and it served as some prelude and preparation for Christianity. To a Christian also there are two worlds, the Unseen and the Seen, the Spiritual and the Material, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of this World, Heaven and Earth,—or if you like so to name them, the Ideal and the Actual. No pair of names that we can hit upon expresses the antithesis perfectly, or without danger of gross misconstruction. The great containing Reality of the Unseen world is God, Creator, Lord, Conservator, Lawgiver and Judge. In Him live and move the angels, and the spirits of the departed, and men, and all that has life; in Him move and act all suns and planets, and all that is. But His particular work, and special outpouring of Himself, is in the Incarnation, whereby Himself has become man. With the Incarnation goes the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, the Ascension and promise of future Judgment, the Church, the Papacy, the Mass, the Blessed Eucharist and the other Sacraments, Grace, Heaven, and—since *contraria sunt in eodem genere*—also Hell. The other is the world of Sense, and of Intellect also, so far as Intellect serves for ascertaining laws of nature, whether physical laws or moral laws, and determining the outcome of those laws in particular cases. This is the world of Physical

Science, and of Politics and Political Economy, and of Business and the ordinary occupations of life. These two worlds are not perfectly distinct. God is the author of both the one and the other. Philosophy, Literature, and Fine Art are conversant with both. But they are distinct to this extent, that a man may live in the second, or lower world, and devote himself to the second, and ignore or even deny the first, and declare that he has no perception of it at all. And many men do so live. For them there is no God, but only the laws of nature. There is no heaven or hell in their recognition. Christ to them is a great teacher of Ethics, by word, by character, and by example, but nothing more. These men are called Rationalists, or Agnostics: their enemies, when they wish to be contumelious, call them Atheists, but there is no man who does not shrink from that appellation. The truest name to give them, and a name that has no offence in it, is that of *men without faith*. Over against them stand *men with faith*. The *men with faith* live, and have their mental vision, in both worlds; the *men without faith* live in, and profess to see no further than, the second world only.

Now a man with faith cannot but expect the world that he believes in to overflow at times into the world that he sees. If some sudden and overpowering calamity is lowering over him, he will not look for his sole means of escape to his own energy and address, abetted by some favourable environment and fortunate combination of nature's laws. *I called upon the Lord in distress*, says the

Psalmist, the man of faith (Ps. cxvii.). The man without faith pronounces such invocation superstition. 'You don't invoke machinery,' he says, 'and there is no agent but acts mechanically.' Entangled in machinery that cannot stop itself, we do not beg it not to crush or grind us. We may have pluck and energy of our own to seize upon the machine and stop its working; but then the doubt occurs,—occurs, that is, to the man without faith,—whether the energy of our own volition does not act mechanically, whether its application is not simply determined by the food that we have eaten, and the present composition and conformation of our muscles and nerves. Away from belief in God, it is hard to believe in the spirituality of our own nature, and in that special manifestation of a spiritual nature which is called *free will*.

The man with faith quite appreciates machinery, and the potency and generality of its action. He confesses the reign of natural laws. But he sees himself able to alter the conditions under which these natural laws shall work. That he is doing all day long, every day of his life, by the exercise of his mental and bodily faculties under the guidance of his will. How he does it, is quite another question; probably he has no theory of freewill to offer, but he is certain that he has such a power. Now what he claims for himself as an intelligent agent, he claims also for God. Man can produce collocations and trace channels for natural laws to act in: much more therefore God can. A skilful physician, knowing the laws of health and disease,

and quite unable to change them, can yet so avail himself of their action as that health shall be restored. Any man believing in a God, powerful and wise, cannot deny Him that control over disease which a medical man possesses: God must have all that and more. God must be the first of physicians, the first of surgeons, the first of engineers. God's work, when it is direct,—that is, not done through natural causes,—and striking the senses, is called 'miracle.' To work a miracle, there is no more need for God to annul a law of nature, than there is either need or possibility for man to annul such a law, when he works a sensible effect. In either case the effect is the resultant of the forces applied. There is no law of nature, that no force higher than the forces of nature shall ever come in. Physical Science has never proved that all existent forces are physical forces,—that there are no angels able to act on matter, no possible action of the Creator Himself in the material world.

It is indeed often said by Catholic divines that a miracle is a reversal of the laws of nature. What they mean is that the *course* of nature is changed by the intervention of a new force not known to nature. It may be taken to be a law of nature, that a hungry lion will devour a man thrown to him. So stated, this natural law was broken, when the lions did not devour Daniel. But the law is inadequately stated. Mill says somewhere in his Logic that the laws of nature should be stated as tendencies only, and then only are they indefeasible.

The lion tends to devour the man, and this tendency will work itself out in act, unless it be checked by some opposite tendency. That tendency may be a strong muzzle; it may be the restraining power of an angel sent by God for that purpose. The law is not broken in the second case any more than in the first, when the law is scientifically stated, as a tendency only.

Whether then, when we pray to God for a miracle, we pray that the laws of nature may be reversed on our behalf, is a question that depends for its answer on the sense assigned to the phrase 'laws of nature,'—whether the phrase be taken in its popular or in its philosophical sense. In the philosophical sense of the phrase, we do not ask that the laws of nature may be reversed, but that a hyperphysical force may intervene as one of the conditions of the collocation under which those laws are to work.

Commonly in our distresses we do not pray to God for a miracle at all, but for something short of a miracle, which we may call a 'favour.' It is not too much to say that God grants a million favours to one miracle in answer to prayer. Christians who pray will assure you that they have never asked for a miracle, and almost certainly, that they have never obtained one, but that they have obtained favours innumerable. A favour differs from a miracle, in not being a direct and sensible display of divine power. In asking a favour of the Almighty we do not ask Him to show His hand so manifestly as we do in asking for a miracle. Thus we ask as

a favour for success in an examination, for which we have worked hard. If ill health had prevented our working, and we knew ourselves to be unprepared, and still we asked that we might pass an examination, where the examiner knew his business, —that would be asking for a miracle. It would also, commonly speaking, be a foolish and irreverent petition. Holy men advise us not to ask for miracles, except in the rare cases in which we feel, what we may well take to be an inspiration from God encouraging us so to do.

When we ask a favour of God, or even a miracle, the boon that we crave absorbs all our interest. We believe that divine omnipotence can grant it: but as to the method of its bestowal we are supremely indifferent, and are usually content to have no knowledge, not even any theory, on that subject at all. We pray to have a fine day for a procession or for a cricket-match. We firmly believe that God is not so impotent in His own creation as to be unable to accord us that favour. But how He is to secure that particular day being fine, whether by a collocation of causes arranged ages ago in foresight of our prayer, or by sending an angel to disperse the clouds, or otherwise,—of this the votary never thinks, any more than he troubles himself to explain his own faculty of free choice; he simply rests on the certainty that he has that faculty, and that God has the power to grant his prayer.

Many of the favours that we ask of God are things that may come about naturally by some

influence exerted on the mind of man, if only such influence can be brought to play. I may readily pass an examination in a subject of which I am not wholly ignorant, provided that God will quicken my mental powers to their best perfection, and guide the latent currents of my thought into opportune courses. In an illness that puzzles the doctors, my friends pray that God may move the mind of my medical attendant to hit upon exactly the right thing to do. If I recover, my medical man takes the credit to himself, not unnaturally; and yet, if I had not been prayed for, his conjecture would not have been so felicitous, and for all his care and skill I should have died. There are perhaps no favours, granted in answer to prayer, so frequent as these. And no wonder: for they are on the lines of certain divine operations that are going on continually in the minds of men all the world over, operations not miraculous and yet supernatural,—I mean, the operations of grace. By what is called 'actual grace,' God Himself is continually guiding the intellect and the will of man, not teaching him new things beyond the compass of his naturally-acquired knowledge, but pressing points of that knowledge upon his notice and appreciation, and sustaining or checking his resolves. This is the daily converse of God with the human soul, without which no soul could ever make its way to heaven. Actual grace is an ordinary process of Christian life, an essential feature of the present order of Divine Providence. Being thus, we may say, committed to acting personally and immedi-

ately upon the minds of men in order to bring them to eternal life, God is not indisposed to work upon those same minds for purposes also of temporal well-being, in answer to prayer, particularly since those temporal favours are granted ultimately in view of the spiritual profit of the persons who pray for them, as were also the miraculous cures wrought by our Saviour.

I knew a Catholic doctor who used to say to people who were praying for the recovery of any of his patients: "Pray that I may be directed how to treat the case." This was a proper recognition of a certain Law of Parcimony, in regard to favours and miracles. Miracles are sometimes used by God to make evident to the Church the heroic sanctity of some of His servants, and afford ground for their canonisation. But, as I have said, divine interpositions, not miraculous, because not visible and manifest departures from the ordinary workings of nature, are usual answers to prayer, and there is no believer who does not believe himself to have experienced them frequently. In particular cases it is not easy to say where favours end, and miracles begin. In general the Law of Parcimony metes out favours liberally, especially in things of the mind, and restricts miracles. When miracles do occur, they occur in clusters, as in the lives of certain saints. Clusters of miracles marked the opening of the Mosaic dispensation, the opening also of the Christian dispensation; and, judging from the Apocalypse, they will mark also the close of that dispensation upon earth, as even in the natural

order the beginning and the end of human life is wonderful. *The nations shall be troubled, and they that dwell in the outermost parts shall be afraid of thy signs: thou wilt make glad the outgoings of the morning and of the evening* (Ps. lxiv. 8).

CONFERENCE XXII.

'MY WITNESSES.'
(Acts i. 8.)

Trinity Sunday, 28 May, 1899.

WE deferred till this Sunday the consideration of the following syllogism.

What is never attested by other than incompetent witnesses, does not happen. But a miracle is never attested by other than incompetent witnesses: therefore.

Further it is asked, and what I have to say will not be quite irrespective of the question: "What is the nature and value of testimony at given times? Did the man of the third century understand, or report, or interpret facts in the same way as the man of the sixteenth or the nineteenth?"

One miracle in our Lord's public ministry enjoys the unique distinction of being reported by all four evangelists, the feeding of five thousand men with five barley loaves and two small fishes (Matt. xiv.; Mark vi.; Luke ix.; John vi.). We are not here arguing the authenticity of the gospels. I assume them to be authentic records. I assume the absence in them of all wilful lying. I assume the witnesses to interpret and report the facts as they

understood them, being on the spot, seeing with their own eyes, and taking an active part in the transaction. I ask whether the date, A.D. 29, goes any way towards vitiating this testimony; whether any truth could come out of Galilee at that early period,—not, observe, true philosophy, or true religion, or accurate criticism, but a true report how a meal was served, and whence the provisions were brought and set before the guests. I maintain that many a man has been hung in England, and justly hung, on the evidence of illiterate persons, in no way better educated, or better apt to observe the things that passed before their eyes, than were Peter and Matthew and John. No doubt, the evidence of these illiterate Englishmen was sifted before a court: but I will presently show that the Apostles' testimony had to undergo a similar sifting and cross-examination.

That there was a great crowd in a desert place, that towards evening they sat down, ate, and had their fill, cannot be denied, unless we are to abolish all details of ancient history. The interesting point is where the provisions came from. Here sundry critics step in with their wisdom. Peering out from their arm-chairs back through the centuries, they know whence the provisions came, better than the men who saw them, handled them, dealt them out, and helped to eat them. Obviously, every man had come out, bearing the usual *cophinus*, or provision hamper; and when the discourse was over, the hampers were opened, parties were formed, and there was a pleasant bivouac. From every side

contributions were made to the Master; and He, from the abundance offered Him, sent His Apostles round to supply the wants of any who might have come insufficiently provided. The Apostles, poor men, thought at the time, or afterwards persuaded themselves, that before their Master took the matter in hand, the *cophini* were all empty: they did not see, or they forgot, how food was forthcoming on all sides, independent of their serving: they were under some hallucination when they asked, *five barley loaves and two fishes, what are they among so many?*: the enthusiasm of the multitudes, who wished to make Him King, was not because they had seen any miracle, but because they had listened to eloquent preaching, and had sat down to a well-organised five o'clock refreshment. In fact, the witnesses to whose ocular observation the four written records are due, were not men at all, but simple 'owls': our critics have imagined, conceived, supposed, and finally know and confidently relate the details of that famous repast. Themselves never having had any miraculous meals, but only such as could be accounted for under regular heads of household expenses, they are ready to set aside any and every testimony of special divine interference. We seem to have retrograded from the third to the first syllogism of our last Conference.

> What I don't know, isn't knowledge;
> And I'm the Master of this College.

The first of Christian miracles is the Resurrection of Christ our Redeemer. The special function of

the Apostles was to be *witnesses of the resurrection* (Acts i. 8, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; iv. 33). Here again I assume the authenticity of the record, and the absence of any set purpose to deceive. The competence of the witness, and that alone, is at present under consideration. Jesus then, according to the Apostles' account, did not simply flit across their path like a wraith: but His tomb was found empty, He spoke to them, ate and drank with them (Acts x. 41), allowed them to handle His wounds, was seen by them and by others many times over, once by as many as five hundred persons together (1 Cor. xv. 5—8). He forced Himself, so to speak, upon their observation, and drew them gradually to accept a conclusion for which they distrusted the evidence of their own senses, that He was risen, as He had said He would rise. Fraught with this conviction, the Apostles went out to bear witness to an incredulous world.

We must beware of the notion that the keenness and vigour of criticism varies according to the inverse square of the distance from the time at which we live. That notion would lead us to conclude that, because nine hundred years ago men loved the marvellous and accepted it with undiscerning credulity, therefore they must have been quite fools, ready to see miracles everywhere and believe them on the slenderest evidence, in A.D. 99 or 29. The curve of the critical faculty, if I may be allowed the expression, is a very wavy and irregular thing in the course of history. There are ups and downs, troughs and culminating points. There are

perhaps epochs of criticism, there certainly are individual critics, meriting the description *ingeniosior quam sagacior*. The age in which the Resurrection of Christ was first preached was the crest of a wave of rationalism. It was the age of the Jew and of the Greek, of Sadducee and Platonist. The Jews were a *stiff-necked people* (Acts vii. 51), an *unbelieving generation* (Matt. xvii. 17). Every student of Greek notices as telling upon himself the critical, rationalistic, matter-of-fact *ethos* of Hellenism, *τὸ ἀκριβές*, *τὸ αὐθέκαστον*. The Sadducees were founded on the belief that there is no resurrection, no spirit surviving death (Acts xxiii. 8). The Platonic philosopher hated the union of body and soul: perfection in his eyes consisted in the soul breaking away, never to be united with a body again (Plato, *Phaedo*, 114 C). No wonder that when the resurrection of the dead was preached on the steps of the Areopagus, *some mocked* (Acts xvii. 32). The rising again in the same body was a new and strange idea to the Greeks, subversive of their best philosophy, and, as the Roman governor Festus thought it, incompatible with common sense and sanity (Acts xxvi. 23, 24; cf. xxv. 19). We may be sure that the Apostles were examined and cross-questioned over and over again by incredulous enquirers about every detail of Christ's Resurrection and of His other miracles. The first century of our era was anything but a believing age. The Greeks of Corinth and Ephesus, whom St. Paul laboured to convince, were probably more intelligent and more capable judges of evidence than the bulk of the

inhabitants of London and Birmingham at this day. He only succeeded with some of them (1 Cor. ix. 22, R. V.; Acts xiii. 48), and, he confesses, with *not many wise according to the flesh* (1 Cor. i. 26). Yet some wise men came in (Acts xiii. 7, 12; xviii. 24), and the faith was planted and took root.

As in the natural order God has *left not himself without witnesses* (Acts xiv. 17; Rom. i. 20), so in every age Christ our Redeemer has on earth those whom He can still call *my witnesses*. The collective body of witnesses to Christ is the Christian Church. If you want to know Christ, there is no need of your turning antiquarian. Go to the Church of to-day: she represents Him and testifies to Him. You do not go to the Record Office to look for the British Government. Hence we must protest against such a view of Christianity as is embodied in the following sentence. "Christianity is and always will remain a great literary and historical problem, a question of documents and testimony." Protestantism may be such a problem, but not Christianity. The problem supposes a dead-handed, antiquarian system, not the living, teaching, ruling Church of Christ. It goes upon the confession that "as the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred," and by implication also the Church of England hath erred, "in matters of faith"; also that "General Councils may err and have erred even in things pertaining unto God" (Articles XIX. and XXI.). But the Catholic and Roman Church

makes no such confession of herself. Queen Victoria does not refer you to Ina of Wessex, but tells you: 'What Ina once was in Wessex, that I am now, not in Wessex only, but throughout the Three Kingdoms, and in much of the world besides.' You do not deal with Ina, but with Victoria and her Government. You do not get your religious instruction out of biblical antiquities, but from the living Catholic Church of this day. She witnesses Christ to you. She guarantees the early Christian traditions, and, in another way, is herself guaranteed by them, even as the feet support the body, and are themselves supported by the body. Your standing is not 'all a question of feet,' as you discover when you try to stand after long confinement to a bed of sickness. For a statue to stand is all a question of feet, duly placed under the centre of gravity: but a living man stands by a vital action all along his body. The Church of to-day is continuous with the Church of yesterday, and of the day before, and of last century, and of all previous centuries up to the first. She binds all ages in unity, and embodies them all. She is willing enough to enter into antiquarian researches, and studies of early documents and testimonies, but with this proviso, that the past must be interpreted in the light of the present: the fragmentary first records must be pieced together according to the plan of the Church now obtaining: the present must not be set aside in the reconstruction of the past. The Pope and the Bishops in union with the Pope are still Christ's

witnesses, and their testimony is as valid as that of the College of the Apostles: indeed it is the same testimony: the Apostolic witness has never ceased in the Church.

Christ while He taught on earth sometimes appealed to antiquity, to Abraham (John viii. 56), to Moses (John v. 45, 46), to David (Matt. xxii. 42—45), but usually to Himself (John viii. 18), to the character of His teaching and the *works* which accompanied it (John v. 36; x. 37, 38; Matt. xi. 2—6). *He taught as one having power* to do wonderful works (Matt. vii. 29). The officers sent to seize Him came back, saying in admiration of His teaching, *Never man spake so* (John vii. 46). The peculiar note of His teaching was unearthliness. Coming as Messiah among a people who were eager for a great temporal deliverer to appear in that capacity, who longed for a Hebrew Alexander to fill Jerusalem with silver and gold, the tribute of conquered nations, He was ever proclaiming that He was not of this world, His disciples were not of this world, His Kingdom was not of this world (John xvii. 16; xviii. 36; viii. 23): therefore His countrymen hated Him and had Him put to death. The same note is taken up by the Apostles, Peter, Paul, and John (1 Pet. ii. 11; iv. 7; 1 Cor. vii. 29—31; Gal. vi. 14; Heb. xi.; 1 John ii. 15—17). It is heard in the voice of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and of the Canon Law. In the cases where in their private lives, and occasionally in their public policy, Popes and Prelates have been unmindful of this ruling characteristic of their

Master, the Church has always suffered for it.[1] The Church has won her way among men precisely inasmuch as her course has been guided by her Master's maxim: *Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice* (Matt. vi. 33); and inasmuch as she has disdained all temporal things except so far as in one way or another they are useful instruments of spiritual good and forward the salvation of souls. This is the 'detachment' of the saints.[2] The saints and saintly men, recognised by the Church as such, best embody the spirit of the Church. It is a spirit that never changes: it is *the mind of Christ* (1 Cor. ii. 16). The world loves it not, but fears it and does it homage. The world is quick to discover when any churchman is wanting in it, and undervalues him accordingly. The great note of the Church is this abiding spirit, unearthly, unworldly, supernatural, peculiarly Christian, which is breathed in the gospels, which peopled the catacombs, which animated the martyrs, which ever saves the papacy,

[1] So much so that a worldly Pope has been applauded by the world. Thus the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, after calling Alexander VI. "memorable as the most characteristic incarnation of the secular spirit of the papacy of the 15th century," concludes: "The Church in her secret heart must rate him the lowest of her chiefs: the world must feel that he deserves much better of it than many much better popes." Of the action of another pope the same authority says (vol. v. p. 823): "To allege that though beneficial to the world it was detrimental to the church is merely to insist that the interests of the papacy are not the interests of mankind."

[2] ἔχου τῶν πνευματικῶν, ὑπερόρα τῶν βιωτικῶν, 'lay hold of the spiritual, look above the temporal,' is the motto attached to the ancient portraits of the greatest of Christian preachers, St. John Chrysostom.

which makes saints; and by loss of which the worldly-minded Catholic and the wilful apostate suffers manifest reversion to the ancient type of paganism.

CONFERENCE XXIII.

A WORD BEFORE A PROCESSION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi, 4 June, 1899.

'OUT of sight, out of mind,' the proverb says. Therefore our Saviour, being about to leave this earth and withdraw His natural presence from among mankind, *made a memorial of his wonderful works* (Ps. cx. 4), even Himself, concealed beneath sacramental veils. In the Blessed Sacrament Jesus is still the Holy Child of Christmas, still the Crucified in daily Mass, still the Way and the Life, still the Wonder-worker, still the Lord from heaven;—all these things at once. The Blessed Sacrament brings the gospel history back again on other feasts of the year, but during Corpus Christi Octave especially It brings heaven upon earth. It blends itself with the body and being of man, and through man with all earthly objects and events, so far as they are of God, sanctifying them, glorifying them, and evolving from them a goodness that shall endure for ever. Therefore, wherever we are able at this time, we carry the Blessed Sacrament in procession, not within the

walls of the church but out in the fields, under the summer sky, among trees and flowers, through the squares and streets and the haunts of our daily life. Jesus is, as St. Ignatius styles Him, our "Eternal King and Universal Lord": His is true Catholic Majesty; we wish Him therefore in these days to penetrate everywhere and to take possession of all we have. We carry Him to see all our treasures, we spread them before Him, for they are His and ours only to use with His permission; all our places of delight, for we would taste no delight that cannot meet His approving eye and be consecrated by His benediction.

Alas, as Corpus Christi comes round, the cry of Ichabod mingles with our Alleluia: *the glory is departed from Israel* (1 Kings iv. 21); the ark of the New Covenant cannot be carried triumphant everywhere as in the days of old. We have built a house for It, and only under the shelter of that roof must It proceed on Its course of benediction. We sing the *Lauda Sion;* but it is *the song of the Lord in a strange land* (Ps. cxxxvi. 4). Thank God, we have a noble house to enshrine the Blessed Sacrament in Cambridge. Thank God, the highest spire in this University town marks the place where It dwells. Thank God also for this little chapel and place of conference, recently dedicated to bear Its name, 'the Chapel of Corpus Christi.' Thank God for the respect and faith and love and concern that is growing about the Blessed Sacrament everywhere in England.

I must not run on with this discourse, since we

have a procession to join. To adopt, or adapt, some of St. Paul's words to the Romans: *I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for you all, for the many prosperous journeys that I have had by the will of God in coming to you, to impart unto you some spiritual grace to strengthen you, as I also have been comforted in you by that which is common to us both, your faith and mine. And God is my witness that I intend to make a commemoration of you always in my prayers* (cf. Rom. i. 8—12). As I am parting from you I say to each of you here: Ever remember this: all your life long, your conduct in regard of the Blessed Sacrament will be the test of your quality as a Catholic, and the measure of your hopes of salvation.

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